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AGRI-NEWS

September 2, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Three methods tried for range improvement.....1
Sheep and wool fair set for Lacombe.....4
$2 billion farm loan program announced.....6
ADC property manager appointed.....9
African students coming to Alberta.....10
Troubles loading your horse almost over.....11
Gala evening offered to all horse lovers.....13
Strange sighting is only a smart berry picker.....14
New 4-H specialist appointed at Barrhead.....16
Associate trade director - Japan appointed.....17
Revenue Canada allows quota tax break.....18
Correction.....22

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September 2,1986
For immediate release

Three methods tried for range improvement

One group of north eastern Alberta farmers is working with 1,600 acres south of Lac La Biche to see if they can economically turn the proverbial sow's ear into good grassland for cattle.

Working with a $116,000 grant from the federal government and the range improvement program from Alberta Forestry Lands and Wildlife, the Lakeland Forage Association is applying three treatments to bush land, which is almost useless to cattle. The objective is to determine the grazing value and cost benefit of the treatments.

Harvey Yoder, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Lac La Biche, says it has been proven the land can be made more productive for cattle, but the test is whether the economic returns justify the cost.

The association is hoping to achieve up to 350 or 400 pounds of beef per acre and maintain productive pastures for 10 years or more without reseeding.

In the five year project the forage association, which includes ranchers from St. Paul, Bonnyville, Smoky Lake and Lac La Biche, will be applying three different treatments to 450 acres within the 1,600 acre Olympic Lake lease area.

Three blocks of 50 acres each will involve shearing the brush in winter with a bulldozer, windrowing and burning the material. The area will be aerial seeded with tame grass. This treatment is expected to cost $55 an acre.

Two other larger blocks are being treated with a spray and burn technique used extensively in New Zealand. The area has already been aerial sprayed with herbicides such as 2,4-D, Banvel and Estaprop, with an assessment of the herbicide affect to be made this fall. Eventually the area will be burned and aerial seeded with tame grass. Overall cost of this approach is estimated at $35 an acre.

(Cont'd)

The third treatment involves 240 acres in small blocks that will be cleared, piled, burned and seeded in a conventional way. Cost of this treatment is estimated at $200 an acre.

Yoder says the areas being treated in the Northern Range Enhancement Project offer very little range value at the present time. They are dense poplar and willow stands and cattle mainly graze along power lines and roadways.

The funding provided through the Agriculture Canada New Crop Development Fund will allow the farmers to apply and monitor range improvement techniques suited for Northern Alberta.

"In the past we have attempted to take southern prairie technology and adapt it to northern production," says a statement from the association. "This has often led to dismal results due to early frosts, sometimes excessive moisture and early snow. High moisture, a cool growing season and poor soil structure are dominant features of the Grey Wooded Soils of Western Canada. These features make pastoral agriculture more profitable than grain production."

While it has generally been believed that turning bush land into rangeland has been too expensive this type of thought and atttitude spurred some producers within Lakeland Forage Associaton to investigate and consider some more cost effective ways to enhance existing bush conditions.

The Olympic Lake project will be developed and monitored over the next five years, but it is hoped the range benefits will last for up to 20 years.

"Presently our philosophy of land clearing and development in Alberta is that the job is completed once the seed is in the ground," says Yoder. "Really this is where the work and management begins. To maintain productive pastures and halt the reversion of brush regrowth, we need to consider many of the management practices that will be used in this project."

(Cont'd)

Three methods tried for range improvement (Cont'd)

Yoder says along with monitoring the three brush treatments and seedings he hopes the project will be a test site for a variety of range management techniques.

He says the association will be looking at aspects such as continuous grazing versus rotational grazing, the affects of fertilization, which species of grass grows best, comparing conventional fencing to electric fencing and different insect treatment methods.

The district agriculturist says he expects the Olympic Lake project to be the site of many field days in the future, providing information on a variety of range management issues.

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Contact: Harvey Yoder
623-5218

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September 2, 1986
For immediate release

Sheep and wool fair set for Lacombe

"Lambs in Lacombe" may sound like a good title for a nursery rhyme but it's actually the name of a first-ever fair, planned later this month, to raise public awareness of Alberta's sheep industry.

Sponsored by the Blindman Valley Sheep Producers Association, the sheep and wool fair will provide a wide range of events and demonstrations September 20 at the Lacombe fairgrounds.

"Events are open to any sheep producer in the province," says Allan Brown a spokesman for the event. "And I think the public will find a lot of interest and a lot of entertainment during the day-long activities."

Featured during the day will be shearing demonstrations and competitions, sheep dog trials (novice and open), fleece competitions, novelty sheep lead, lamb judging, wool crafts, commercial booths and breed displays.

"There is a crafts sale planned with a large number of displays and we will be offering our special lamb barbecue for fair goers as well," says Brown.

There will be a full day of events, starting with the sheep dog trials at 10 a.m. and ending with a shawl auction and commerical ewe lamb sale at 7 p.m.

"Events like this will help give the sheep industry a higher profile," says Cathy Gallivan, Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist in Edmonton. The department is working with the sheep producers association and the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission to organize the event.

"All events are geared for the public to give them a greater appreciation of the work involved and type of meat and wool products available from the industry," she says.

One popular, high-speed event during the day will be the sheep-to-shawl contest. This involves competing teams racing against the clock to see who can shear a sheep and have the fleece woven into a shawl the fastest.

(Cont'd)

Sheep and wool fair set for Lacombe (con'td)

Another main attraction is the sheep dog trial.

"This event highlights the relationship between a working sheep dog and its master, the shepherd," says Brown. "The Border Collie is known around the world for its courage and loyalty as well as its almost human intelligence. No other dog, except the Greyhound, can match him for speed and grace of movement."

Amateur photographers still have time to register for the photo competition. Any photos related to the sheep industry can be entered in one of four categories: sheep, shepherds, wool - processing or product and sheep landscapes. Prints, with name and address, must be mailed to Barb White, Box 102 Winfield, Alberta, T0C 2X0 by September 15.

Further information and entry forms for both the livestock events and the crafts sale can be obtained from John Hull, Lambs in Lacombe, Box 709, Rimbey, Alberta, T0C 2J0 or telephone 843-6690.

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Contact: Cathy Gallivan
427-5077

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

$2 billion farm loan program announced

The Government of Alberta has unveiled a $2 billion loan program which will put the province's unique financial strengths to use in helping farm families through a difficult economic time.

The Alberta Farm Credit Stability Program, announced August 6 by Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga and Associate Minister Shirley Cripps, is a long-term, fixed rate farm finance program that will reduce and stabilize the cost of borrowed capital, improving cash flow and allowing producers greater freedom in making long-range plans for their operations.

Through the program, the government will pass along to farmers its ability to borrow at preferred interest rates, providing farm financing at a fixed 9 per cent annual rate of interest for up to 20 years. This will allow Alberta producers to refinance existing higher interest loans, or to borrow new money, knowing just what their payments will be each year for the term of their loan.

"The increasingly capital-intensive nature of modern farming has made farm debt a very important factor in the farm economy," says Elzinga. "Servicing Alberta's $6 billion of farm debt represents a significant problem to the industry. That problem has been compounded by deflation, weakness in international markets, low prices and the resulting cost-price squeeze.

"The emphasis of the Alberta Farm Credit Stability program is on refinancing existing debt, and reducing and stabilizing the cost of credit. This will introduce an essential measure of long-term stability to Alberta's agriculture industry."

Information and application forms for the program are now available at participating banks, credit unions and Alberta Treasury Branches throughout the province. The borrower will arrange his loan through one of these lending institutions.

(Cont'd)

Individual farm families may borrow up to $200,000, while partnerships, corporations or communal arrangements may borrow up to $600,000, depending on farm family involvement and eligibility.

If the borrower already has a loan with the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (AADC), the maximum amount loaned under the stability program must take the AADC loan into account. If, for example, a farmer is already indebted to AADC for $50,000, the most he or she will be eligible to borrow under the new stability program is $150,000.

However, to keep in step with the new loan program, the AADC has also reduced interest rates on new and existing loans to 9 per cent.

Associate Minister of Agriculture Shirley Cripps, who is responsible for the AADC, says the stability program follows through on a promise made by the government earlier this year.

"The Alberta Farm Credit Stability Program was announced in the Speech from the Throne on April 3," she says. "Our government is fulfilling this commitment with the start-up of the program. I am confident that the stability program will contribute greatly to a return to profitability by Alberta farmers."

An administration office, the Alberta Farm Credit Stability Centre, has been established in Edmonton to monitor the program and to determine the amount each eligible applicant may borrow under the program.

Eligiblity for loans will be decided by the lending institutions, and declined applications will not be subject to review or appeal outside the lender's loan approval process.

Lending guidelines have, however, been relaxed to allow as many farmers as possible to participate in the program. There are no restrictions with respect to a producer's level of assets or net worth. The ability to repay will be the principal consideration in determining eligibility for loans.

To qualify, an applicant must live in Alberta, be a Canadian citizen or legal permanent resident of Canada, and meet repayment, management and security requirements.

(Cont'd)

New entrants to farming as well as established farmers can apply; once the loan is in place, however, borrowers must be actively engaged in the production of primary agricultural products in the province.

Loans must be used to enhance or maintain income in a farming operation that has a reasonable expectation of profit. The loans can be used to refinance any farm debt owing on July 31, 1986. Where loans are refinanced under the program with the same financial institution, no prepayment penalty will be charged to the borrower.

Loans may be used to buy or improve land, to buy, build or improve farm buildings and fixed equipment, to purchase farm machinery and implements or to buy livestock for breeding purposes.

The funds may not be used to purchase cars or light trucks, recreational vehicles or mobile homes, to build or improve residential buildings or mobile homes, or to buy residential buildings, unless the buildings are attached to land being acquired to carry on a farming business.

The term of loan will ordinarily be 20 years, but may be reduced (to a minimum of 10 years) in cases where a shorter term is deemed by the producer to be in his or her best interest. Payments will be made over the life of the loan, and will consist either of a blend of principal and interest, or of equal annual payments of principal plus interest calculated on the declining balance.

The repayment schedule will depend on the cash flow situation of each borrower. In cases where an operation receives income on a regular monthly basis, the borrower may be required to make monthly payments; where farm income is irregular, the borrower may pay quarterly, semi-annually or annually. In all cases, prepayment on principal will be permitted without penalty.

Further details on the stability loan program are available from participating lenders or may be obtained by contacting the Alberta Farm Credit Stability Centre in Edmonton, at 1-800-232-9479 (toll-free from anywhere in the province) or at (403) 422-9167 (Edmonton area).

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Contact: Ken Moholitny
(403) 422-9167

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

ADC property manager appointed

A native of the Brooks area, who, for nearly 20 years, has been involved in farm land management and farm credit throughout Alberta has accepted a new appointment with the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) in Camrose.

Herb Andersen, who has been acting property manager at ADC since June, has been appointed property manager in an announcement by E.G. Suarez, ADC executive director of administration.

Andersen, who was born at Medicine Hat and raised on the family farm near Brooks, will be responsible for the management and administration of ADC's portfolio of farm properties. There are currently 240 properties owned by the corporation. Andersen will oversee the sale or lease of the farm land and any buildings.

He will also be responsible for ADC's property insurance program.

Andersen who has been with ADC since 1982 was assistant manager of farm lending from 1982 to 1986 and also served as acting secretary to the board in early 1985.

Prior to joining ADC he had extensive experience in the private sector working from 1973 to 1982 in appraisal work and managing farm and ranch properties in southern Alberta.

In the early 1970s he worked as a credit officer with the Industrial Development Bank in Calgary and as an agricultural economist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton from 1967 to 1969.

Andersen has a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from the University of Alberta and a master of business administration from the University of Western Ontario.

He is in the process of completing course work for the Accredited Appraiser Canadian Institute designation.

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Contact: E. George Suarez
679-1310

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

African students coming to Alberta

Twenty students from the African east coast country of Tanzania will be working with Fairview College staff over the next two years in a $1 million training program to learn the technique of beekeeping.

College President Neil Clarke, says approval of funds under the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has just been received. He says the details of when the students will arrive have not been worked out, although they are expected in time for the 1987 season.

This is the second group of Tanzanians to be trained at Fairview in beekeeping. Ten beekeepers took the program in 1984. Under the latest agreement 20 more will be trained - 10 a year for two years.

Clarke says Fairview will receive assistance from Alberta Agriculture specialists in providing instruction to the visitors.

Personnel from the Peace region college toured Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya in 1983 to determine program requirements and assess the state of the apiculture industry in those countries.

The Fairview training will help set up commerical demonstration apiaries in Tabora region of Tanzania, set up a training program similar to Fairview's at the Tabora Beekeeping Training Institute and establish commercial demonstration apiaries in the Coastal, Miombo Woodland and Dryland regions of Tanzania.

The college will receive $460,000 from CIDA's Institutional Cooperation and Development Services Program which will cover 43 per cent of the project. The Tanzanian Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism will pay $162,000 and the remaining $457,000 will come from Fairview College as a contribution "in kind".

For further information on the project contact Denis McKenna at 835-6633.

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Contact: Denis McKenna
835-6633

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

Troubles loading your horse almost over

Anyone who has ever had trouble loading or trailering a horse will be interested in one of the seminars offered in Calgary in September at the largest show jumping competition in the world.

Whether you're a weekend cowboy or a full fledged horse breeder the subjects covered in seminars offered in conjunction with the Alberta Breeds for the World Showcase at Spruce Meadows will probably be of interest.

The seminars offered during the five days of the Spruce Meadows Masters competition September 10 to 14 will give practical advice to all horse owners, says Bob Coleman, a horse specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton. The seminars will be offered September 10, 11 and 12.

Subjects to be covered include loading and trailering a horse, basics of dressage and what to look for in a pleasure horse. All seminars will be offered in the Spruce Meadows Breeders Hall.

"The seminars will be given by experts in the field and the information and advice is just excellent," says Coleman. "They not only tell you what you should be doing or what to look for, but they also provide a live demonstration as part of the presentation."

Bill Collins, a noted western trainer from Calgary will give advice on loading and trailering a horse, September 10 at 1 p.m. and September 12 at 10:30 a.m.

From West Germany, Manfred Loop, a noted expert in his field will give two presentations on the basics of dressage, September 11 at 10:30 a.m. and September 12 at 2:30 p.m.

Pete Fraser, a paint horse breeder and light horse judge from High River will give three presentations on selecting a pleasure horse.

(Cont'd)

Fraser will not only provide information for those looking to buy a horse, but also help those wanting to improve their skills in evaluating horses. His seminars will run September 10 at 4 p.m., September 11 at 1 p.m. and September 12 at 1 p.m.

For further information on the seminars contact Bob Coleman at 436-9150 or Les Burwash at 291-4596.

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Contact: Bob Coleman
436-9150
Les Burwash
291-4596

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

Gala evening offered to all horse lovers

If a horse enthusiast can only make one equine event this year, they should reserve September 12.

The Evening of the Horse, will be a gala presentation of the best bred and best trained animals featured this year at the Spruce Meadows Masters in Calgary.

Offered at the half way mark of the annual international show jumping classic, the evening will provide a major jumping event sponsored by Air Canada, a musical ride, a show from West Germany and a parade of the best horse flesh in Alberta and the world.

"If you can only go to one day at Spruce Meadows, September 12 is the one you should pick," says Bob Coleman, a horse specialist with Alberta Agriculture. "You don't have to be a horse owner, even if you just like the animals, the Evening of the Horse is worth seeing."

Starting at 4:30 p.m. the evening includes: the major jumping event, the Lord Strathcona Musical Ride from Calgary, the Cella Stallions of West Germany, a presentation of the mares and foals from the breeding program at Spruce Meadows, 15 breeds in the Alberta Breeds for the World Showcase held in conjunction with the jumping event and finally a fireworks display.

The Spruce Meadows Masters runs daily from September 10 to 14. For more information on the special evening or other events during the week contact Bob Coleman at 436-9150, Les Burwash at 291-4596 or Spruce Meadows at 256-4977.

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Contact: Bob Coleman
436-9150
Les Burwash
291-4596

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

Strange sighting is only a smart berry picker

A strange sighting in the bush near Grande Prairie recently wasn't an intergalactic visitor but just a wise berry picker who knew how to outsmart the mosquitoes.

The Alberta Agriculture regional home economist in Fairview, says the berry picker looked a little strange, but managed to comfortably ward off the insects for hours by wearing disposable coveralls.

Susan Meyer, says the berry picker's success story is another practical use for the throw-away clothing.

One type of disposable coverall is being tested by Alberta Agriculture and the University of Alberta this summer to see how they work in protecting farmers using toxic pesticides and chemicals.

But the berry picker found a different application for the coveralls in the annual war against pests.

"I had some visitors come out to our farm near Clairmont to pick berries," says Meyer. "Two of them just had their ordinary clothing, while the third wore a suit of disposable coveralls over her street clothes.

"It was in the evening, the mosquitoes were bad and the two without the coveralls were back to the house in 10 minutes. The third one wore her coveralls with the hood up, put repellant on her hands and face and picked berries for hours.

"She looked a little strange, like something from outer space but she said she was comfortable the whole time," says Meyer.

The disposable coveralls available at most agriculture supply centres range from $6 to $10. The regional home economist says for projects such as berry picking or any yard work, a pair of coveralls will probably last for a year.

(Cont'd)

Strange sighting is only a smart berry picker (cont'd)

Robin McNamara, left, with disposable coveralls heads off to pick berries with Jordie Carlson. Both are from Grande Prairie

"Another good use for the coveralls is to keep a pair in the trunk of your car and if you ever need to do some minor engine repairs or change a tire on the highway you can just slip them on and not get your good clothes dirty," says Meyer.

For further information contact any district home economist or Susan Meyer at 835-2291

Contact: Susan Meyer
835-2291

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

New 4-H specialist appointed at Barrhead

A southern Alberta native has been appointed regional 4-H specialist for Alberta Agriculture's northwest region.

Janet Van Roessel, born and raised on a farm near Bow Island, has taken over as the 4-H specialist based in Barrhead. The announcement was made by John Tackaberry, director of the northwest region.

Van Roessel replaces Candace Bjorge who previously held the position for four years. In her new post the specialist will be responsible for the administration of all 4-H clubs, programs and workshops in the region.

A 1984 graduate from the University of Alberta, with a major in general agriculture, Van Roessel's work experience includes four months as a summer assistant district agriculturist in Warner, one year with the Alberta Agriculture crop protection branch in Edmonton and most recently eight months as a regional 4-H assistant in the northwest region.

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Contact: Janet Van Roessel
674-8248

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

Associate trade director - Japan appointed

Jeff Kucharski has been appointed associate trade director - Japan with Alberta Agriculture's market development division.

The appointment was announced by Jackson Gardner, senior international trade director (Pacific/Asia) with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

Kucharski is currently on assignment with The Seiyu Ltd., a major food retailer, in Tokyo, Japan. He is studying the Japanese food production processing, distribution and retailing systems. Upon his return to Alberta in 1987, he will begin assisting Alberta exporters of processed food products in their efforts to market to Japan.

A native of Edmonton, Kucharski earlier worked in the personnel department of a major oil company. He began his assignment with Alberta Agriculture in 1985.

Prior to his appointment, Kucharski taught English and studied Japanese at a language institute near Tokyo. He holds a bachelor of commerce degree from the University of Alberta.

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Contact: J. Jackson Gardner
427-4241

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

Revenue Canada allows quota tax break

Tired of getting up at 4:30 every morning? Are the dairy cows becoming a burden? Are you wishing you could sell the cows and milk quota but are afraid of the high tax implications?

Well go back to bed, some relief is in sight.

Revenue Canada has announced a change in policy with the taxation of milk quotas which doesn't eliminate the income tax burden but allows the farmer to spread it out over several years.

In the past, farmers selling milk quotas had to pay income tax on the full amount all in one shot, even if they received the actual payment for the quota over several years.

A recent federal bulletin says quotas, described as eligible capital property, sold under an agreement for sale, will now incur a tax liability when the payment is received, rather than in the year of sale.

This means the farmer won't have to pay the tax until he actually receives the money.

"The ramifications of this slight change are considerable," says Merle Good, a farm management economist with Alberta Agriculture in Olds. "Before, if a farmer sold his quota under an agreement for sale and the total proceeds were not received in the year of sale he was "deemed" to have received the entire value of the quota and was taxed accordingly."

To apply the new rules, Good has created the fictitious Farmer Polansky who has decided to sell his cows and quota.

"Polansky has 1,000 litres of fluid quota and 60 cows for sale. The asking price is $1,250 per cow and $175 per litre for the quota. Polansky originally had purchased his cows and quota in 1976. The value of the quota at that time was $11.30 per pound for an equivalent value of $25 per litre for a tax cost of $12.50 per litre," says Good.

(Cont'd)

Revenue Canada allows quota tax break (cont'd)

"Polansky has not depreciated his quota and is willing to accept payment of 50 per cent down and carry the balance over five years. Polansky will be at the top marginal tax rate."

	Prev. System (50% down)		New System (50% down)	
	Cows	Quota	Cows	Quota
Cash Rcvd.	$37,500	$\frac{\$175,000}{2}$=87,500	$37,500	$87,500
Taxable Income	37,500	75,000	37,500	37,500
Tax owing(48.8%)	18,300	36,600*	18,300	18,300**
Net After Tax	19,200	50,900	19,200	69,200
Total (cows & quota)	70,100		88,400	

1. $\frac{\text{Selling Price}}{2}$ - Depr.Value

$\frac{175,000}{2}$ = 87,500 - 12,000
= $75,000 x 48.8% (Tax Rate)
= $36,600*

2. $\frac{\text{Selling Price}}{2}$ - Depr. value x % of Proceeds Received

$\frac{175,000}{2}$ = 87,500 - 12,500
$75,000 x 50% =
= 37,500 x 48.8% (Tax Rate)
= 18,300**

Under the previous system, Polansky, would have been hit by a large tax bill based on the entire selling price of the quota, even though the proceeds were to be spread over the five year agreement. Under the new system Polansky only pays tax on the funds received under the agreement.

In this situation, the tax saving in the year of sale amounted to $18,300.

"The question that now logically arises is: What do I do if I have sold quota under a sale agreement before the change in Revenue Canada's policy?" says Good.

(Cont'd)

"In plain language, a farmer who has sold quota under a sale agreement prior to the change in Revenue Canada's position can ask for a reassessment on the basis of the adopted policy."

Revenue Canada will allow a reassessment if a farmer can file a notice of objection for that particular year."

The rule for filing notice is 90 days after receiving the assessment. If Polansky sold his quota in 1985 and received his assessment notice July 1, 1986, he has until October 1 of this year to ask for a reassessment.

"When a change is made in the field of income tax an advisor should try and tie in other parts of the act that will result in an even better tax strategy," says Good.

As an example, Section 80 of the Income Tax Act says, if it is noted in a will, debts will be forgiven upon death with no tax consequences to either party.

"By combining this strategy with the new policy rules, farmers should consider charging their children up to fair market value for their quotas over an agreement for sale, with a forgiveness of debt clause in their wills," says Good.

The are at least five advantages of this strategy:

a. The parents can receive a retirement income, over time, without the entire tax liability payable in the year of sale.

b. The parents' retirement is more secure if the child sells the quota to a third party.

"Under the old method most parents elected a low value for their quota in order not to trigger tax in the year of sale. Unless a buy/sell agreement was in place, the child could liquidate the herd and quota and only pay the parents the remaining debt, being a low value. The child could pocket the difference between the fair market value of the quota and the original low purchase price," says Good.

(Cont'd)

"However, by charging a fair market value, any subsequent liquidation by a child results in the parents receiving a substantial increase in the balance owing to them."

c. The child can negotiate a term which allows for adequate repayment to meet the annual payments. Note that there is no time limit for the sale agreement and therefore the tax can be spread over a longer time than exists for land and buildings. The maximum term for those assets is 10 years.

d. The child can look forward to not paying forever if the parents decide to forgive the debt remaining upon their death.

e. The child's tax base on the quota is now increased due to the higher selling price of the quota.

"It is imperative for those farmers who have sold quota over time, during the past year, to contact their accountant to file for a possible reassessment," says Good. "Farmers contemplating a sale of their dairy herd and quota should consider arranging their sale under the new rules to arrive at a potentially significant reduction in their tax liability."

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Contact: Merle Good
556-4237

September 2, 1986
For immediate release

Correction

In the August 25, 1986 Agri-News article regarding the first payment made under the Alberta Red Meat Stabilization Program, a figure regarding the support price of hogs was incorrect. It should have read the national average market price level from April to June 1986 was $72.32 and the price support was $67.96 not $69.76. There was no payout for hogs, under the program, during this period.

AGRI-NEWS

AL 1.671

September 8, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

4-H was a good move for Sherry Roth....................................1

New head librarian for Alberta Agriculture..........................4

Copper and zinc supplementation needed..................................6

Rat patrol maintains daily vigil..9

Processing feed grain may not be worthwhile.........................10

Dairy processing specialist appointed...................................14

Farm manual served its purpose..15

Useful farm enterprise information available.........................17

District home economist takes regional post..........................19

Ask for proof of Taber corn..20

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September 8, 1986
For immediate release

4-H was a good move for Sherry Roth

Belonging to a 4-H club won't guarantee a youngster a successful career, but the experience does help build character and self-confidence, important throughout life, says Alberta's leading 4-H member.

"For me, joining 4-H was one of the best things I've ever done," says Sherry Roth of Heisler, Alberta who earlier this year was named the 4-H Premier's Award Winner.

She says regardless of whether someone lives at Pincher Creek, Brooks, Hanna, Rocky Mountain House, or Grande Prairie there is something to be gained from 4-H.

"Sometimes people just think about 4-H as a group of kids learning crafts or grooming calves," says Roth, who was raised on the family farm east of Camrose.

"But there is much more to it than that. There's a lot of personal development that comes about just by being a club member and participating in the various projects.

"You learn public speaking, which helps build self confidence. You learn responsiblity. You learn perseverance. You learn self respect."

The 17-year-old who has just begun studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton says it was part of that 4-H training that prompted her to pursue studies in political science which eventually will lead to a law career.

Roth was named winner of the 4-H Premier's Award in May. As part of her responsibilities as the "ambassador" of 4-H she was helping raise consciousness of programs during the 4-H media blitz in late August. This year's theme is: "The 4-H Team -- check it out!".

The Heisler area student was a 4-H sewing club member for eight years.

"My mother had been a 4-H leader at one time and she coaxed me a little. And then a lot of my friends were involved and they were talking about all the fun they were having, so it seemed like the thing to do."

(Cont'd)

Eight years later, after holding all executive positions with the Heisler Hemmers and having attended camps, programs and conferences, Roth came away from the "Selections" program in May as the top 4-H member in Alberta.

Selections is an annual program which brings together top 4-H members from across the province to select those who will be attending national and international conferences involving youth and 4-H. Also emerging from the session is the 4-H Premier's Award Winner.

Roth was one of about 144 club members who attended Selections this spring.

"You have to send in a report on your year's activities to the regional 4-H specialist and from that you hope to be one of those picked to attend Selections.

"I wasn't even aware of the Premier's Award when I applied, I was just hoping to win one of the trips," says Roth.

At Selections Roth became one of the eight finalists competing for the Premier's Award. After meeting with the selection committee, giving an impromptu speech and being interviewed, she was named the outstanding 4-H member.

She has just returned from Michigan where she attended the 12-day Danforth Leadership Camp, sponsored by the American Youth Foundation and Ralston Purina Canada Ltd.

"I have an obvious bias, but I really believe 4-H is something every youngster should at least try," says Roth. "There are a wide range of clubs in which people can get involved. Out of 33 projects there are only seven that involve livestock. There's everything from crafts to computers.

(Cont'd)

4-H Premier's Award Winner Sherry Roth of Heisler, Alberta.

"The 4-H motto is 'learn to do by doing' and I think that is very important. There are people there to guide you but you have to do things yourself. The whole experience just helps you to grow and mature and become a better person," says Roth. "And in the meantime for someone like me, I also learned to sew."

For further information on 4-H programs in your area contact a district home economist or a regional 4-H specialist.

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Contact: Shannon Gordeyko
427-2541

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

New head librarian for Alberta Agriculture

Alberta Agriculture has a new chief librarian following the transfer of Margaret Bhatnagar who founded the department's library services branch in 1972.

Rob Bateman, who joined the department in 1980 and has been in charge of technical services, has assumed his new post as head of the library services branch, based in the J.G. O'Donoghue building on 113 Street in Edmonton.

Bhatnagar, who went from office to office 14 years ago to scrounge material to begin what has today become a well respected and extensive reference library, will be in charge of library services for the historical resources division of Alberta Culture. Bhatnagar will be based in the Provincial Museum and Archives complex at 128 Street and 102 Avenue in Edmonton.

In her new post she will be in charge of the main provincial museum library and its four branch libraries.

The staff change was announced by Alan Champion, director of the information services division for Alberta Agriculture. Both appointments became effective September 1.

Bateman served as acting department head for a year while Bhatnagar was on a leave of absence. Before joining the department he worked for a library in London, England for nearly a year. Prior to that he worked in an editorial capacity for a Toronto publishing company, Micromedia Ltd.

He got his introduction to library services 11 years ago, working for the Royal Ontario Museum Library in Toronto.

Bhatnagar was hired in 1972 to begin an Alberta Agriculture library, at the department offices located then at 9718 107 Street.

(Cont'd)

From a one person operation with virtually nothing, the library services branch has grown to employ six people and house 25,000 catalogued books, 12,000 reports, an extensive collection of legislation, an excellent microfiche collection including all U.S. department of agriculture research documents and extensive papers from the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. The library's reference services section has access to more than 250 databases worldwide.

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Contact: Rob Bateman
422-1302

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

Copper and zinc supplementation needed

Copper and zinc are trace minerals that should be provided as supplements to livestock in all parts of the province according to data from five years of feed analysis compiled by Alberta Agriculture.

The data collected from testing more than 1,000 feed samples shows that nowhere in Alberta are the natural levels of copper and zinc high enough to negate the need to provide supplementation.

"There appears to be a deficiency province-wide," says Al McNeil, a ruminant nutritionist with the department in Edmonton. "The results from these samples show us that no area has enough copper and zinc."

The sources of the actual feed samples have been plotted on a provincial map. The samples include many that were sent in by farmers for routine feed analysis by the department's soil and animal nutrition laboratory, along with some collected by Alberta Agriculture staff over the years.

The plotting of copper and zinc levels is similar to an earlier project mapping the levels of selenium found in feeds throughout the province.

Although the deficiency was recognized in the past, it is only now that nutritionists are putting a greater emphasis on the value of copper and zinc.

"The problems associated with a deficiency of copper and zinc in livestock are difficult for the producer to actually observe," says McNeil.

"If there is a deficiency there are problems such as a reduced rate of gain for growing livestock, reduced fertility and perhaps a general increase in health problems. The problems are hard to pinpoint."

If there is a marked copper deficiency livestock may show signs of diarrhea and a real lack of zinc could result in hoof problems. Insufficient levels of both trace minerals will cause the animals to look rough and scruffy.

(Cont'd)

Copper and zinc supplementation needed (cont'd)

McNeil says the best solution is to have all feed analysed annually and to make sure trace mineral supplements include adequate amounts of copper and zinc.

"Unlike high levels of selenium (12 to 15 mg per day) which lead to concerns over the health in beef cattle, similar concerns are not usual with high levels of copper and zinc," he says. "However concerns arise when the level of one mineral is increased in the feed (such as excess supplementation) causing a mineral imbalance. If you get way too much of one and not enough of another this can cause a whole series of other problems."

Nutritionists recommend a mixture of 2,500 milligrams of copper per kilogram of trace mineral salt and 7,500 milligrams of zinc per kilogram of trace mineral salt for beef cattle.

Sheep producers should be aware that sheep can be seriously affected if they over-consume copper. A recommended mixture for sheep is 300 milligrams of copper per kilogram of trace mineral salt.

"This sort of information again just reinforces the importance of having feed analysed every year," says McNeil. "When samples are sent in for testing, ask for a report on copper, zinc and selenium levels along with the main calcium and phosphorous levels.

"An animal nutritionist or veterinarian can then use the analysis to recommend the right mineral supplementation for your livestock."

Along with the Alberta Agriculture feed testing lab in Edmonton there are five private laboratories in the province which can provide the service.

For more information on copper and zinc levels or feed test analysis contact a district agriculturist or the animal nutrition section in Edmonton at 436-9150.

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Contact: Abdul Suleiman
436-9150

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

Rat patrol maintains daily vigil

There aren't too many idle days for the Pied Pipers of agriculture who patrol a 380-mile long corridor along the Saskatchewan border to make sure Alberta remains rat free.

In fact three of the seven pest control officers who maintain the patrol actually take a swing into Saskatchewan territory to help stem the problem there before the pests have a chance to run across the border.

The 35-year-old Alberta rat control program has a solid track record in keeping the rodents out of the province, says John Bourne of Vermilion, a regional problem wildlife supervisor with the department.

Through daily patrols and responding to reports of sightings, the rat population in Alberta is kept at a negligible level.

"There are actually many days of the year when there are no reports of sightings when you can literally say the province is rat-free," says Bourne. "But it's not a time to let down your guard. One pregnant female rat can multiply into hundreds of rats in a year."

The patrol just inside the Saskatchewan border is in response to the heavier farm concentration in certain areas along the boundary.

The Alberta rat patrol has always checked an 18-mile-wide strip along the Alberta side of border. But according to Bourne, because of a greater rat problem in Saskatchewan and a greater concentration of farms in three areas between the two provinces, the Alberta patrol was expanded.

At Lloydminster, Wainwright and Medicine Hat the pest control officers work on the Saskatchewan side to nail the rats before they make it to Alberta.

"The more farming population you have in an area, the more habitat you have for rats," says Bourne, a wildlife biologist. "Rats basically migrate on foot and if there is no food or shelter they won't make it."

(Cont'd)

Bourne says the type of farming activity can make a difference in the rat population. A mixed farm operation can provide more food and shelter for rats than a straight grain farm.

At Lloydminster, with the greatest density of farming activity,the pest control officer works only five miles into Saskatchewan, while further south across the border from Wainwright, where there are not quite as many farms, the officer patrols 25 miles into Saskatchewan.

"Because of the difference in density and type of farming in these two areas there is a difference in the degree of infestation," says Bourne. "Further south, across the border from Medicine Hat, again the problem isn't as bad as it is at Lloydminster."

Alberta Agriculture funds the rat patrol program although the money is actually handled by the seven rural municipalities and agricultural service boards along the border, who hire and supervise the pest control officers.

Regional specialists supervise several pest control programs. Along with Bourne who looks after the Vermilion and Red Deer regions, are Eric Hutchings working in the Lethbridge and Airdrie regions and Robert Acorn, in charge of programs in the Barrhead and Fairview regions.

"Although Alberta is virtually rat-free the force is always there," says Bourne. "If for some reason the rat patrol program was interrupted there would be a serious problem in one year."

It is estimated it costs a farmer $40 a year for every rat on a farm. That includes damage to grain and forage, damage to buildings, increased heating costs because of insulation removal and other problems caused by Norway rat activity.

For more information on the rat control program contact a regional problem wildlife supervisor or a district agriculturist.

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Contact: John Bourne
853-1111

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

Processing feed grain may not be worthwhile

Contrary to the usual advice, it may not be worthwhile this winter to grind or roll feed grains for livestock, unless you're in the feedlot business.

With grain prices so low this year, farmers and ranchers may be further ahead to feed whole grains to their cattle, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

"Even if they have to feed an extra pound or so of grain a day it may still be cheaper than the cost of processing the grain," says Rob Hand, regional livestock specialist with the department in Barrhead.

Hand says studies have shown little advantage is gained in feeding rolled or ground grains to weaned calves and wintering cows, especially oats. However, he says it is worthwhile to feed rolled barley to feedlot calves, as long as the processing costs don't get too high.

The value of rolling or grinding oats, wheat and barley, is to make the grain more digestible and make the nutrients and energy more available to the animal. Breaking open the kernels gives the best returns. For every pound of grain fed, the farmer should get the most pounds of gain on his livestock.

"Traditionally, with higher grain prices a farmer couldn't afford to have any grain wasted," he says. "He had to feed to get the maximum efficiency from every pound of grain.

"What we're saying now is probably short term advice that may apply to this winter and early into next year," says Hand. "But once grain prices are up again it will all change."

In deciding whether to feed whole or processed grains, Hand says there are costs and other factors to be considered.

(Cont'd)

Home grinding and rolling costs range from $8 to $20 per tonne depending on factors such as the capacity of the mill, volume processed, grain moisture content and degree of fineness. Commercial feedmills charge from $8 to $12 per tonne, but transportation to and from the feedmill must also be considered. Short hauls can range from $4.50 to $7.50 per tonne.

"In addition to the cost of processing there are other variables influencing the decision," says Hand. "The producer has to consider mineral separation, the age of the animal being fed, the level of roughage in the diet and the type of grain being used."

Supplements such as salt, trace minerals and vitamins will easily separate from the grain, especially if the grain is not ground or rolled, says Hand. Pelleted products such as 32 per cent supplement pellets or dehy pellets should stay in suspension with whole grains.

In considering the age of animal, the specialist says calves in the first winter after weaning will get less benefit from processed grains than older feedlot cattle.

There is also less benefit from processed grain as the level of roughage in the diet increases. Calves on background diets (gaining from one to 1.5 pounds a day) would show less effect from processing than calves on high grain diets.

Hand says because the cattle are on a high roughage diet, with 60 to 70 per cent of their food being hay or silage, digestion is naturally slower.

"With a slower rate of passage of food through the rumen, there is more time for the whole grains to be digested," he says.

Looking at the types of grains involved, Hand says there is less benefit from rolling or grinding oats, than in processing barley or wheat.

The hardness (or softness) and shape of the oat kernel may influence the effect of processing. Improvements in digestibility from processing range from 5 to 10 per cent for oats to 35 to 60 per cent for barley.

(Cont'd)

Processing feed grain may not be worthwhile (cont'd)

Research from South Dakota shows no influence of grinding oats for weaned calves over a 150 to 200 day period. The two experiments compared the average daily gain (ADG) and feed conversion efficiency (FCE) between whole and processed grain.

	Whole oats		Processed oats		
	ADG	FCE	ADG	FCE	
Experiment 1	1.44	15.06	1.42	15.21	(ground)
Experiment 2	1.57	12.46	1.45	12.85	(rolled)

"This research is in agreement with University of Alberta research where Holstein steers gained faster on whole oats compared to processed oats (2.24 versus 1.94 pounds per day) but at a similar feed conversion (7.52 versus 7.67 feed/gain)," says Hand. "Based on this research it is difficult to justify rolling or grinding oats for weaned calves or even wintering cows on high roughage diets, regardless of the price of oats."

Work at the U of A confirmed findings from another study at Washington State University which compared rolled barley to whole barley.

At the U of A rolled barley resulted in higher daily gains and better feed conversion than whole barley. The cattle gained 2.7 pounds a day on rolled barley compared to 2.02 pounds a day on whole barley, with a feed conversion of 4.76 versus 5.94 feed/gain, respectively.

"The reduced digestibility of whole barley, combined with similar or reduced intake effectively lowers energy intake and subsequent gain," says Hand. "To obtain the advantages of rolling, the barley kernel need only be cracked into one or two pieces. Fine grinding or excessive rolling increases the cost of processing with no improvement in animal performance."

Particularly for the feedlot operator, in addition to production changes, there are overhead fixed costs such as interest and yardage to be considered. Fixed costs range from 25 to 30 cents per day for the feedlot steer.

(Cont'd)

Processing feed grain may not be worthwhile (cont'd)

The faster the animal gains and the sooner the feedlot operator can ship to market, the more money he can make.

"Improvements in gain as a result of processing barley will result in animals being marketed sooner, lowering the cost per pound of gain," says Hand. "It is difficult to calculate an exact price where rolling barley for feedlot cattle becomes uneconomical. In general terms, when rolling costs exceed 20 to 25 per cent of the barley price, rolling is questionable."

If barley is $90 a tonne and rolling costs exceed $18 a tonne, the value becomes questionable. If the barley is $50 a tonne and rolling costs more than $10 a tonne, it becomes questionable.

With barley at $70 a tonne, rolling should still lower the cost of gain by one to two cents per pound, even after processing costs are included.

"For wintering cows fed less than eight pounds of grain daily, processing costs may not be recovered, especially if the grain is oats," says Hand. "Similarly if oats are fed to weaned calves, grinding or rolling does not appear warranted. For feedlot calves, continue rolling barley until processing costs exceed 20 to 25 per cent of grain prices."

For further advice on the value of grain processing contact a district agriculturist, a regional livestock specialist or a provincial animal nutritionist.

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Contact: Rob Hand
674-8248

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

Dairy processing specialist appointed

Michael Mavromaras has been appointed a dairy processing specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

In an announcement by Ken Waldon, head of the department's processing branch, Mavromaras will be responsible for dairy manufacturing plants and dairy products processed in the Edmonton area.

Mavromaras graduated from the University of Manitoba with a general bachelor of science degree in 1976. He later went on to earn a bachelor of science degree in agriculture, specializing in food science in 1979 and a master of science degree in food microbiology in 1981.

After graduation he worked for three years with Lucerne Foods Limited in Edmonton in processing and quality control. More recently he worked at Royal Oak Dairy in Hamilton, involved in quality control, production and sanitation.

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Contact: Mike Mavromaras
427-2451

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

Farm manual served its purpose

With other sources of current information now available, Alberta Agriculture has decided to stop publishing its "Farm Management Data Manual".

The manual was developed and distributed by the farm business management branch at Olds for more than 20 years, says Craig Edwards, a farm management economist.

"It was intended to provide a source of input - output relationships for farmers and advisers to use in examination of alternatives for farm decision making. It served that purpose well, in a time when useful information was not so readily available from numerous sources as it is in 1986.

"Because current information is now being provided by many sources at more frequent intervals than in the past, the need for the data manual has diminished. The farm business management branch has decided to stop printing and distributing the data manual and the updates in 1986."

In 1985 the branch started a new annual publication called "Sources of Printed Farm Management Information from Alberta Agriculture". The list was sent to those subscribers of the 1981 data manual who sent in request cards for the update material. About 700 copies have been distributed since last year.

The list provides the titles of publications, useful for farm management, published by Alberta Agriculture. Farmers and others interested in farm management will be able to pick the publications relating to their special needs from the many available from the print media branch, production and resource economics branch, statistics branch, market analysis branch, and the farm business management branch.

Some publications are printed and distributed several times a year. They will be available to those requesting to be put on the specific branch mailing list.

Cont'd)

Farm manual served its purpose (cont'd)

"We expect the list to provide the sources for information we formerly provided in the data manual, but offering a selection of more specific and current publications for specialized needs," says Edwards.

Several production manuals are also available from district extension offices and the print media branch. These manuals will supply much of the information no longer being provided by the data manual.

"Sources of Printed Farm Management Information from Alberta Agriculture" is limited to publications closely related to farm management. It is not intended to take the place of the print media branch "Publications List", Agdex 001, which is a reference guide to all agricultural publications.

The "Sources" list is intended to be a supplemental reference specifically useful to find farm management related information. It has been updated for 1986.

Those on the mailing list now will be sent the revised list. Requests for new subscribers to be put on the mailing list should be sent to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0 or call 556-4248. Send your questions or comments to the same address.

"We have another publication available which we hope will serve, to some extent, the purpose of the data manual," says Edwards. "It is used as an enterprise oriented reference book in a course for lenders. Production and economic data are co-ordinated in useful applications to enterprises such as grain and oilseed production, forage production, beef, dairy, hog, sheep and poultry production."

"The Agricultural Workshop For Lenders Manual" is available at a cost of $20 per copy from the farm business management branch, or by calling (403) 556-4240.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

Useful farm enterprise information available

Farmers looking for current information to assist them in making any number of management decisions will be interested in a reference manual produced by Alberta Agriculture.

"It provides useful, ready access to production and economic data that is needed to make business decisions in agriculture", says Doug Barlund, a farm management economist with the department's farm business management branch in Olds.

The 600-page manual, first produced for bankers and other lenders has proven to be a useful tool for producers as well.

Divided into 12 sections, on a variety of farm enterprises ranging from grain production to all classes of livestock, the "Agricultural Workshop for Lenders' Manual" gives fundamental guidelines on what returns a farmer can expect from money spent.

As an example, if a cow/calf operator wants to buy another 20 cows, the beef section of the manual will provide figures that will help in budgeting the costs and returns for this addition to the herd.

Other sections help to confirm whether cash flow estimates are realistic, give advice on whether it is better to buy or lease equipment, offer a general range of machinery values, provide sizing and space requirements for farm buildings, and much more.

The material in the manual was originally written by provincial agricultural specialists, compiled by the farm business management branch and used as a reference manual for the Agricultural Workshop for Lenders.

This five-day workshop has been held annually since 1980 on campus at Olds College and has provided an improved understanding of the major agricultural enterprises in the province to over 500 Alberta lenders.

(Cont'd)

If further information on a specific subject is required, the manual also contains a contact list of names and telephone numbers of agricultural specialists within Alberta Agriculture.

Barlund says the manual is also useful to agriculture college students as a reference manual.

Requests for the manual have come from agricultural consultants, appraisers, accountants, landmen, and farm owner/managers, as well as from agricultural lenders who have not had the opportunity to attend the lenders' workshop.

"Many users have commended the usefulness of the manual in their daily business activities", says Barlund. "Lenders have found the manual particularly useful for providing a quick assessment of enterprises they are not fully familiar with."

The manual will also serve as a replacement for the two-volume Farm Management Data Manual that will no longer be available from Alberta Agriculture.

The Agricultural Workshop for Lenders' Manual is available for $20 a copy. Further information about the manual and how to obtain a copy is available from Alberta Agriculture's Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

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Contact: Douglas E. Barlund
556-4245

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

District home economist takes regional post

The district home economist (DHE) in Fairview will fill a different role for a few months while a regional specialist takes a temporary leave to go back to school.

Nan Bartlett, who has served as the DHE since 1979 will act as the regional family resource management specialist in both the Fairview and Barrhead regions filling in for Karin Holst. Holst, the full time family resource management specialist, has returned to university to complete a master's degree.

In making the announcement Shirley Myers, head of Alberta Agriculture's home economics branch in Edmonton says Bartlett will be working in family resource management from September through to April.

Meanwhile, Cindy Bishop who has been in training as a district home economist in Camrose, will be filling in as Fairview DHE while Bartlett is away.

Born in Mohall, North Dakota and raised in Smithers, B.C., Bartlett received a bachelor of home economics from the University of British Columbia in 1978.

She has worked as a district home economist in Fairview since 1979 and acted as the regional family resource management specialist in Fairview from September to December 1985.

In the next eight months she will provide assistance and information to district home economists and the public in the two regions, in areas of farm and home record keeping, family budgeting, time management and family financial security.

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Contact: Nan Bartlett
835-2291

September 8, 1986
For immediate release

Ask for proof of Taber corn

Is every vegetable stand in Alberta selling Taber corn?

It may look that way from the advertising but consumers should check before they buy, says a spokesman for the vegetable growers.

As protection for both producers and consumers, anyone selling table corn from a roadside stand must be licensed and must be able to provide proof of the product's origin, says Sharon Chmielewski manager of the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board (AFVMB).

"Once they are licensed we provide each vendor (and each truck) with an "Alberta fresh corn poster" which identifies the corn producer's name and address and the vendor's licence number.

"If a consumer approaches any stand this poster should be on display or they can ask to see it. If the vendor can't produce the poster then the consumer should be suspect of where the corn is from and notify our office," she says.

The objective of licensing vegetable vendors in Alberta is to make sure the consumer is getting a good product and producers aren't getting a bad name, says Chmielewski. Corn is the only field grown vegetable crop in Alberta allowed to be sold through roadside vendors.

At this time of year Taber corn is one of the most common names advertised by vendors from Peace River to Foremost. Each one is to be licensed by the AFVMB, although not all comply.

To keep tabs on the vendors the marketing board has three official scrutineers, one in southern Alberta, one in Calgary and one in Edmonton making spot checks to ensure roadside stands are licensed. They also have several "checkers" throughout the province keeping the board advised.

(Cont'd)

Ask for proof of Taber corn (cont'd)

"But the bottom line for consumers is to make sure they are getting good corn," says Chmielewski. "Taber corn isn't a variety, it just refers to the location where it is grown. Consumers shouldn't just assume if they see a sign that says Taber corn that they are getting top quality.

"The product may have been damaged or it may have been stored too long, so people should check and be sure of what they are buying."

There are about 300,000 dozen ears of table corn grown in the Taber district every year. The Taber season runs from early August to about mid-September, with the first frost of the fall actually deciding how long the season lasts.

From a quality control standpoint, the Taber Chamber of Commerce is also concerned about who is selling Taber corn.

"The chamber is looking at ways to see if there can be some controls put on the "Taber" name," says chamber manager Shelby MacLeod.

"We had reports this year that some vendors in Calgary were selling Taber corn two weeks before corn here was actually ready. It's not very good for producers in our area if someone gets bad "Taber" corn and it isn't even from here."

MacLeod also warns consumers to check the quality of what they are buying.

Chmielewski asks consumers to advise her Lethbridge office at 327-0447 if they discover vendors who aren't licensed or if the vendor can't provide proof of where the product was grown.

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Contact: Alan Champion
427-2121

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AGRI-NEWS

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September 15, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Good prices expected for beef this fall........1
Think now about snow management........3
Dairy product sales improve........5
New DA, marketing specialist appointed........7
Hog prices in decline........9
Webworms infest some lawns........10
Prepare lawn for winter........12

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 15, 1986
For immediate release

Good prices expected for beef this fall

It could be one of the best seasons in recent years for producers selling calves this fall, according to a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Although it won't last forever, the demand for calves should be "very strong" as buyers seek to utilize plentiful supplies of low priced grains and forages, says Gordon Herrington a livestock analyst with the department in Edmonton.

The price for heavier feeder animals, of 700 pounds or more, should be about the same as last year, he says, although steer calves should climb to the $100 and $115 per hundredweight (cwt) range. Heifers will be discounted less.

Herrington says one of the underlying factors affecting the demand for cattle and subsequently the prices is cheap feed grain.

Prices for fat cattle should be fairly strong throughout September and October and into November, although the analyst expects prices to be down from December on through to February 1987.

He says with heavier feeders being kept on pasture longer this year there is a strong demand which has kept prices "relatively high".

"Currently they are at their price peak," says Herrington. "They will be coming off grass shortly, increasing the supply. I think prices will weaken a bit but they won't drop drastically."

Calves are in the brightest spotlight as they are in demand from all corners.

Again, because of the cheaper feed, calves are in demand for backgrounding and by feedlots.

"There also appears to be a strong interest in replacement heifers and all breeding stock," says the livestock analyst. "And I think this will continue as long as we have cheap and plentiful supplies of forage and grain."

(Cont'd)

Good prices expected for beef this fall (cont'd)

Calf prices are expected to remain good through to early 1987.

"For the cow-calf operator this will probably be one of the best years he has seen in a long time," says Herrington. " Other cattle prices are good right now, but it is pretty well business as normal.

Because prices are high, most of the demand for calves will come from Alberta buyers.

"These high prices will restrict the demand segments," says Herrington. "Our prices are out of alignment with U.S. and eastern Canada prices and much higher. Demand strength will be eroded by the absence of U.S. buyers and very hesitant out-of-province buyers. Principally, demand will be locally based."

For more information on the livestock market situation contact Gordon Herrington at 427-5376.

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Contact: Gordon Herrington
427-5376

September 15, 1986
For immediate release

Think now about snow management

A slight change in harvesting technique this fall could go a long way in reducing erosion and improving soil moisture important to both fall and spring seeded crops.

By leaving more stubble on a field a farmer should actually see several benefits says Dick Heywood, a water management specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge.

"Crop yields in Alberta are generally restricted by lack of moisture," he says. "One way to improve spring soil moisture, and thus crop yields, is through snow management. That is, preventing snow from blowing off fields so that it melts in place and increases stored soil moisture."

Soil moisture storage can be increased in all types of soils, but the largest increases have been found on soils that crack. It is believed that cracks allow greater water infiltration during snow melt.

"The amount of moisture stored varies from year to year, depending on the level of fall soil moisture, the accumulated snowfall and climate conditions during winter, and the snow melt period," says the conservation and development branch specialist.

"Snow trapping can increase the efficiency of soil storage of overwinter precipitation by 10 to 20 per cent. This generally translates to a soil moisture increase from two-thirds to more than one inch. With this additional soil moisture reserve, wheat yields can be increased by three to six bushels per acre."

The simplest way to trap snow is to maintain stubble. Heywood suggests leaving the stubble as tall as possible and protecting it by minimizing fall cultivation.

The stubble will hold snow until the accumulated depth is equal to the stubble height. If the stubble is taller than the snow on the ground it will be able to trap drifting snow as well.

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[illegible] six kernels per spike.

The simplest way to [illegible]

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ground it will be able to [illegible]

(Figure)

1. Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch. [illegible]

Further increases in snow storage, leading to improved soil moisture, can be achieved by modifying wind movement across a field, says Heywood.

One method is to vary the stubble height by swathing at different settings.

"A farmer can do this by leaving alternating areas of tall normal stubble with strips of unharvested grain several rows wide," says Heywood. "Several types of deflector or clipper attachments for harvest equipment have been developed for this purpose. Another method, used in the United States, has been to plant strips of several rows, permanently, to tall wheat grass."

Snow trapping, in addition to improving soil moisture, reduces both wind and water soil erosion by protecting the soil surface.

"Winter wheat production can also be improved by use of snow trapping. In this case winter wheat should be seeded directly into the stubble. The snow trapped in the stubble will protect the young crop from cold temperatures and wind erosion, as well as providing additional moisture."

For further information contact Dick Heywood in Lethbridge at 381-5154.

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Contact: R.T. Heywood
381-5154

September 15, 1986
For immediate release

Dairy product sales improve

Albertans consumed more milk last year reversing a recent downward sales trend that has been blamed on a sluggish provincial economy.

Total fluid milk sales, which are consumer products such as whole, 2 per cent and skim milk, were up 1.6 per cent in the 1985-86 dairy year over sales for the previous year, says a market analyst with Alberta Agriculture.

"The most recent figures are an encouraging sign," says Alan Dooley, dairy and poultry analyst with the market analysis branch in Edmonton. "Fluid sales seem to have halted their decline and it appears that the market may have stabilized."

In line with national consumer preference the demand for low fat milk is up across the country, says the analyst.

"For the current dairy year we expect a continued increase in the sale of 2 per cent and skim milk in Canada."

Preliminary figures show total milk and cream production for both fluid and industrial milk at 20.892 million kilograms of butterfat in 1985-86 compared to 20.828 million kilograms in 1984-85.

Cheddar and specialty cheese production were also both up significantly over 1984-85 levels, says Dooley.

He expects there will be continued good demand for cheese and fresh processed products such as yogurt, although butter, skim milk powder and concentrated whole milk sales will probably be down.

Locally, the price of Class One fluid milk began the 1986-87 dairy year unchanged at $50.09 per hectolitre. Further delcines in the fluid milk price formula could prompt some price adjustments later in the dairy year.

Nationally the prices paid to industrial milk producers has been increased in the current dairy year. There is no planned increase in Canadian industrial milk production quota.

(Cont'd)

Internationally it appears world milk production will be up this year, says Dooley. The European Economic Community (EEC) and the United States will either maintain or reduce the rate of growth of their milk production, but other major producers, such as the USSR, expect production increases.

"World milk production is expected to increase in 1986," he says. "Trade in dairy products should be relatively high. International prices, however, will be under pressure as exporting countries compete to reduce dairy product surpluses."

For further information or a copy of the dairy summary, contact Alan Dooley at 427-5382.

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Contact: Alan Dooley
(403) 427-5382

September 15, 1986
For immediate release

New DA, marketing specialist appointed

Drayton Valley will have a new district agriculturist and producers in two regions will have a first-ever marketing specialist following two staff appointments announced by Alberta Agriculture.

Gerald Laarhuis, who has been working for the department in Sangudo, will be taking over as the new DA in Drayton Valley replacing Doug Walkey who is moving to Red Deer to assume a new position as marketing specialist.

The appointments were jointly announced by John Tackaberry, director, northwest region in Barrhead, and Alan Hall, director, north-central region in Red Deer.

Laarhuis has been working as a DA in training with Lloyd Giebelhaus in Sangudo.

Raised on a farm near Tofield, he earned a bachelor of science degree in 1984 from Montana State University, majoring in animal science with a post graduate degree in agricultural business.

Before coming to Sangudo he was a weed inspector for the county of Leduc, a feed sales representative for United Feeds and worked with both swine and dairy livestock at Olds College farm.

Walkey, in his new position, will be one of three marketing specialists in the province. Responsible for all areas of the marketing program, with an emphasis on livestock production economics, he will primarily provide an extension service teaching marketing know-how to farmers.

The Drayton Valley DA for more than eight years, he will provide farmers with basic marketing principles to assist in making routine management decisions.

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(Cont'd)

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Room

As an example, he says, he may assist a producer in assessing feed costs and cattle prices in helping decide whether it's a good time to either buy or sell feedlot cattle.

Walkey, who will serve both the north-central and northeast regions, will also provide advice on the grain marketing system and alert producers in his area to marketing opportunities.

Both appointments became effective September 15.

30

Contact: John Tackaberry
674-8264
Alan Hall
340-5376

September 15, 1986
For immediate release

Hog prices in decline

From the record highs of more than a dollar a pound in mid-August, hog prices have started a drop which is expected to continue into 1987, says a market analyst with Alberta Agriculture.

Prices have already dropped about $10 to $12 per hundredweight (cwt), says Gordon Herrington, with the market analyst branch in Edmonton. From a high of just over $100 per cwt, prices are about $90 to $92 per cwt and that is expected to drop to $70 per cwt by early 1987.

"Producer pricing over the next six months will be very sensitive to changes in supply," he says. "Essentially, weak demand and very narrow margins at the processing and retail level will preclude further upward movements in prices at those sale points and pressure producer prices downward."

The livestock analyst says prices could drop even further than the $70 per cwt.

"Price movements below these levels are highly possible, especially if pork supplies and supplies of other meats become seasonally large. This may occur during the latter stages of the fourth quarter of 1986 and during the whole of the first quarter of 1987."

While the price drop seems severe, it is still expected that hog production will remain profitable as feed costs have and will continue to decline into 1987.

For more information on the hog market contact Gordon Herrington at the market analyst branch at 427-5376.

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Contact: Gordon Herrington
427-5376

September 15, 1986
For immediate release

Webworms infest some lawns

Tiny caterpillars that travel underground are raising havoc with some lawns in Alberta causing everything from small brown patches to total destruction.

Sod webworms, which are always around, seem to be particularly bad this year, especially in southern Alberta, says Kathy Linowski at the Alberta Horticultural Research Center (AHRC) in Brooks.

"We've had reports from Brooks, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and other centres in southern Alberta with people complaining about brown patches in their lawns," says the public information officer.

"The problems range from small dead patches, to areas a couple metres across, to total destruction."

The damage is caused by the sod webworm which is a little tan brown caterpillar with a dark brown head. The worm is the immature stage of small white moths many people probably saw around their yards in mid-August.

Those moths layed eggs which have now turned into these caterpillars.

Linowski says the problem can be identified if the homeowner can pull out a clump of the dead grass and all the roots are missing. She says the problem first appears as a wilted area of grass which suddenly turns brown.

Three insecticides on the market which can be used to control the webworms include carbaryl, under the brand name Sevin; diazinon which is sold under the same brand name and chlorpyrifos, under the brand names Solguard or Dursban.

Linowski says the lawn should be well watered before the insecticide is applied to bring the webworms near the surface. Apply the insecticide according to directions and then water the lawn again to carry the insecticide into the grass roots.

(Cont'd)

The spokesman says about 15 minutes of watering will be enough for most of the chemicals used, although diazinon should be soaked for about an hour to get the best pentetration into the soil.

"If you have any signs of sod webworms you should spray the whole lawn," says Linowski. "The caterpillars could be just undetected elsewhere under the grass and could cause more problems.

"Do not spray the lawn if there is no sign of the webworms. These chemicals should only be applied as needed and not used as a hedge against a problem that might occur.

Any treatment should be applied before the end of September as the caterpillars will soon be going into a dormant stage for the winter.

The AHRC spokesman says for repairing the damaged area, sod can be laid in the fall or seed can be planted in the spring.

For more information on the sod webworm problem contact any Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist office or Linowski at 362-3391.

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Contact: Kathy Linowski
362-3391

September 15, 1986
For immediate release

Prepare lawn for winter

There won't be many more opportunties to mow the grass this year, but homeowners can take a couple steps this fall which should lead to a more vigorous lawn next spring.

Kathy Linowski with Alberta Horticultural Research Center (AHRC) in Brooks says fall is a good time to fertilize the lawn and tackle some weed control problems.

The AHRC spokesman says the fall fertilizer should be the same one used in early spring.

"By fertilizing in the fall the lawn should green up early," she says. "I would recommend a fertilizer that has both nitrogen and phosphorous. It should be applied before the end of September and well watered to make sure it has dissolved and reached the roots."

Linowski says fall is also a good time to attempt weed control.

"Perennial weeds such as quackgrass and Canada thistle are getting ready for winter and storing food in their roots. It is a good time to apply a herbicide because it will also be drawn into the roots and have a greater effect."

Because of the improved growing conditions there were more mushrooms evident in lawns this year and fairy rings continue to be a problem everywhere. Linowski says there is no chemical treatment that can be applied to control these problems.

There are publications available from Alberta Agriculture which provide good advice to home gardners on lawn care. Information such as Fairy Ring Control in Lawns (Agdex 273/636-2) and Home Lawns (Agdex 273/20-1) are available from the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Kathy Linowski
362-3391

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AGRI-NEWS

September 22, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Your product is on the line....1
Lorraine Bryan joins Airdrie staff....2
New 4-H specialist for Fairview....3
Updated publications list available....4
Good season to tackle weeds....5

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

September 22, 1986
For immediate release

Your product is on the line

Producers of agricultural food products need not feel helpless when it comes to getting consumers to buy their products, say specialists with Alberta Agriculture.

The home economics branch of the department is organizing a one-day conference in November to show the producer how he or she can be involved in selling their product to the consumer.

The Agriculture Product Promotion Conference, called "Your Product Is On The Line" will be held November 25 at the Lethbridge Lodge on Scenic Drive in Lethbridge, says food specialist Cathy Edge with the department in Edmonton.

The program covers topics ranging from a discussion of what motivates consumers to buy particular products to ways to present a product to its best advantage.

A media session will tell producers how a farm news story is put together and a panel discussion will provide an opportunity for people who promote their own beef, lamb, pork, vegetables, poultry, pulses, grains and oilseeds to talk about what promotions work best for their products.

Anyone interested in the conference should contact their local Alberta Agriculture district office to get their name on the list to receive a registration form. Registration fee is $15.

For further information contact Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and nutrition specialist or Cathy Edge both in Edmonton at 427-2412 or district home economist Linda Barvir in Lethbridge at 329-5238.

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Contact: Cathy Edge
427-2412

September 22, 1986
For immediate release

Lorraine Bryan joins Airdrie staff

A native of the Innisfail area has joined the veterinary staff at Alberta Agriculture's laboratory in Airdrie.

Dr. Lorraine Bryan, who was raised on the family farm east of Innisfail, has been appointed a diagnostic pathologist at the Airdrie Regional Veterinary Laboratory.

She replaces Dr. Paul Frelier who left Airdrie earlier this year.

As a diagnostic pathologist, Bryan will be part of the team in Airdrie conducting examinations on animal carcasses and tissues to diagnose causes of death in farm animals. The lab primarily works with south-central Alberta veterinarians.

Bryan has just completed a master's degree in pathology at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) in Saskatoon. Conducting her thesis on cancer eye in cattle, she intends to maintain a special interest in skin pathology at the diagnostic laboratory.

She began her formal training with two years in agriculture at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, before being accepted in the veterinary medical program at WCVM.

After graduating as a doctor of veterinary medicine in 1982 she worked temporarily at veterinarian offices in the north Saskatchewan community of Nipawin and in the Edmonton area community of Fort Saskatchewan.

She later practised for a year at Consort, concentrating on beef cattle. She spent another year in Winnipeg working in a small animal emergency clinic before returning to Saskatoon to work on the master's degree.

30

Contact: Dr. Dennis Bolingbroke
948-6868

September 22, 1986
For immediate release

New 4-H specialist for Fairview

A Camrose native has been appointed the regional 4-H specialist for the Peace River region.

Janet Kerr, who was raised on the family farm in the Camrose area has taken over her new position in Fairview, replacing Susan Morris who has moved to Red Deer to become 4-H specialist for the north central region.

The appointment was announced by Don Young, director of the Alberta Agriculture Peace River region.

Kerr was involved in 4-H activities in Camrose and held executive positions such as president and secretary treasurer with the Camrose District 4-H Council.

She received a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from the University of Alberta in Edmonton in 1982 specializing in animal science and economics.

Prior to accepting the Fairview post she acted as an administrative secretary for the Camrose Regional Exhibition Association.

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Contact: Don Young
835-2291

September 22, 1986
For immediate release

Updated publications list available

Today's farmer needing access to the most current information on farming technology and management should obtain a copy of Alberta Agriculture's latest publications guide.

The department's Publications List for 1986-87 has just come off the press listing more than 1,200 different publications directed at commercial farmers and their families.

"The publications listed provide a wealth of information to help Alberta's farmers remain as informed and up-to-date as possible," says Scott Reid, head of the print media branch.

All publications are available without charge.

The department distributed about 930,000 technical information publications during the past year. Two-thirds of these were handed out by Alberta Agriculture field offices while one-third were distributed directly by the publications office in Edmonton.

Included in the new list are 189 new and revised publications that have been published since the list was last issued a year ago.

The publications cover almost every imaginable topic relating to agriculture and farm life. Categories include field crops, horticulture, livestock, soils, agricultural engineering and economics, insects, diseases and pests, home economics and student publications.

Copies of the Publications List are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or from the Publications Office at 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Farmers can keep up-to-date on new publications on a monthly basis by receiving the "What's New in Publications" newsletter. Anyone wishing to be added to the mailing list should fill out the pre-paid mail reply card in the Publications List booklet or write to the print media branch at the above address.

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Contact: Scott Reid
427-2121

September 22, 1986
For immediate release

Good season to tackle weeds

Although the 1986 growing season is just about over, fall is a good time to try and eliminate some weed species, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Control measures won't work on all weeds at this time of year, says Walter Yarish head of the weed control section in Edmonton, but winter annuals and perennial weeds can be treated in a couple of ways.

Winter weed annuals include common weeds such as stinkweed and shepherd's purse which germinate in the fall, overwinter as a rosette and take off early in the spring.

Yarish says any fall tillage which disturbs the young weed plants and shakes the dirt from the roots is an effective control measure.

He also suggests post emergence herbicides applied in the fall will have a marked effect on controlling weeds. Because the plants are more vulnerable in the fall a chemical application should produce good results.

If the rosettes are allowed to overwinter they will be heartier and more difficult to chemically control in the spring.

Mechanical and chemical weed control measures can also be applied to perennials in the fall says Yarish.

Perennials include persistent weeds such as sow thistle, Canada thistle, toadflax and quackgrass.

Yarish says the farmer should first identify the species to be controlled and use the appropriate control measure.

Although perennial weeds are more difficult to kill, he says, cultivation will probably weaken most making them more vulnerable to winter damage.

"Cultivation disrupts the root system and as the plant is trying to repair itself it uses energy. The more energy it uses at this time of the year, the weaker it will be heading into winter and the more susceptable to winter damage."

(cont'd)

Chemical treatment in the fall has a similar impact, says Yarish. The weed plant is getting ready for winter and storing food in its roots. The chemical is taken in by the plant and transported to the roots where it will do the most damage.

"In either treatment getting to the roots is the key," he says. "If we can weaken or starve the roots then we'll have a better chance of getting rid of the plant."

Treating weeds at this time of year offers the advantage of allowing the farmer access to areas of the field which weren't accessable before and also there is less concern about chemical drift because the crop has been removed.

However, the specialist says the fall weed control program should be considerate of two factors.

When using cultivation as a control method, the farmer should be aware of the potential for increased water and wind erosion caused by opening up the land. Secondly, before using a chemical weed treatment the producer should know what crop will be grown on that land next spring.

"The herbicide used will depend on what type of weed you're trying to control," says Yarish. "A specific herbicide may also be the worst enemy for the crop you plan to plant next spring.

"It's important to do your crop planning first and then be sure the herbicide you use won't adversely affect next year's crop."

The weed control specialist says preventing weeds from getting established is the best approach.

He suggests buying pedigreed seed and checking the certificate of analysis from the supplier to determine which if any weed seeds are included.

"Particularly if you have near weed-free land, checking the analysis is good way to make sure you don't introduce some weed that isn't already there," he says. "But it is important to order your seed early in case you need to make some change before planting."

(Cont'd)

Good season to tackle weeds (cont'd)

Yarish also warns that farmers buying hay should check to make sure it doesn't contain weeds. He says weed-infested hay is one of the easiest ways to spread weed problems around the province.

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Contact: Walter Yarish
427-5329

AGRI-NEWS

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September 29, 1986

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This Week

Farming costs decline....1
Alberta companies receive assistance....4
Hay auction offers a special feature....5
Review panel schedules informal hearings....7
Frost damaged canola seed can be used for hog feed....10
Alberta marks Export Trade Month....15
Farm women's conference set for Grande Prairie....17
Dairy technologist appointed in Vermilion....18
Timing critical for fall soil samples....19
Barley production hits record level....22
Wheat surplus keeps prices down....24

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Farming costs decline

Surprisingly, many of the major farming expenses have declined in 1986 according to a province-wide survey of nearly four dozen goods and services used by Alberta farmers.

Although not all the cost reductions are significant, the figures indicate an encouraging trend for farmers who haven't heard much good news lately in light of poor markets for many commodities.

The Alberta Agricultural Input Monitoring System (A.I.M.S.) operated by the statistics branch of Alberta Agriculture in co-operation with Unifarm, monitors farm input prices across the province.

Forty-two monitors located in all regions collect prices for 43 farm input items each month. The average monthly prices for the province are published by the statistics branch and made available to the public.

Up to August, A.I.M.S. reports that prices of key farm inputs such as fertilizer, feed barley, hay and fuel were below 1985 levels. Together, these inputs normally account for about one-third of total farm cash operating expenses in the province.

The average price of urea and ammonium phosphate fertilizers for the first half of 1986 fell by 1.7 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively, compared to the same period last year. Although these are not large declines, the trend is encouraging for farmers.

In addition, under the Alberta Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan (AFFPPP), producers are eligible for a rebate of $50 per tonne of actual nitrogen and $25 per tonne of actual phosphate used in fertilizer formulations. Despite declining prices and the price protection program, total fertilizer use in the province declined by 6.2 per cent for the fertilizer year ended June 30, 1986.

Price declines for feed barley were more impressive. The average price of feed barley for January - June 1986 was almost 26 per cent less than in 1985. Hay prices have declined a more moderate 2 per cent during the same period.

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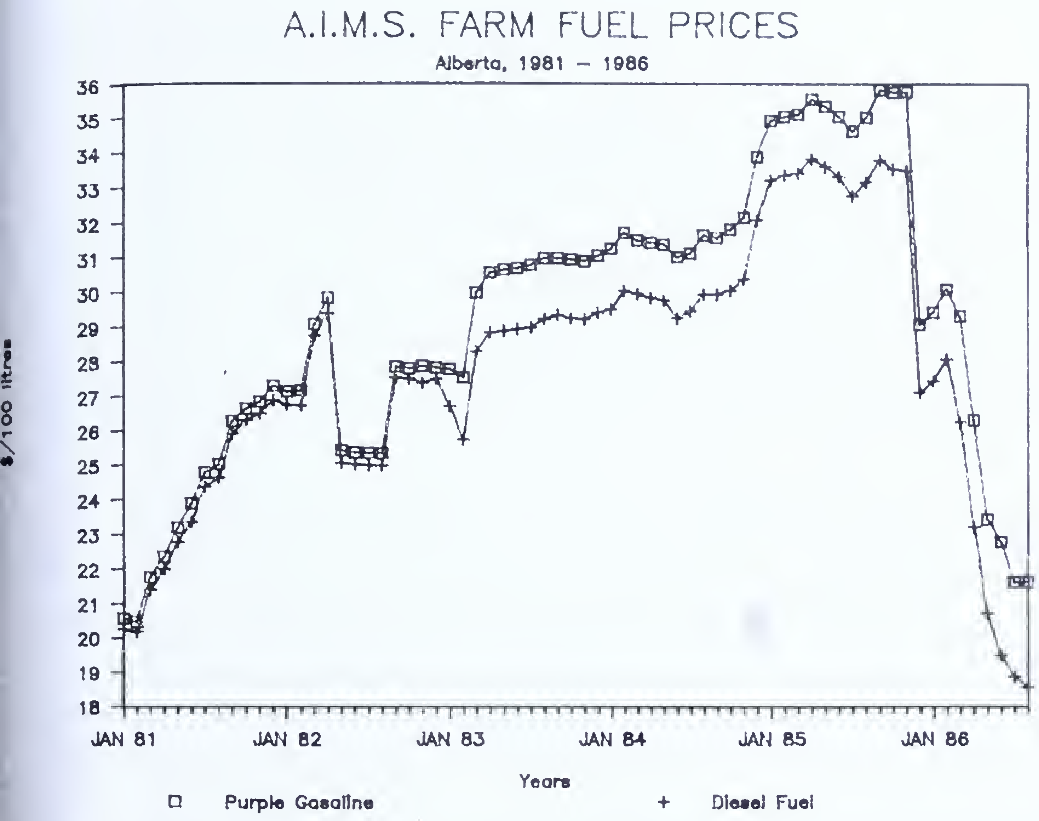

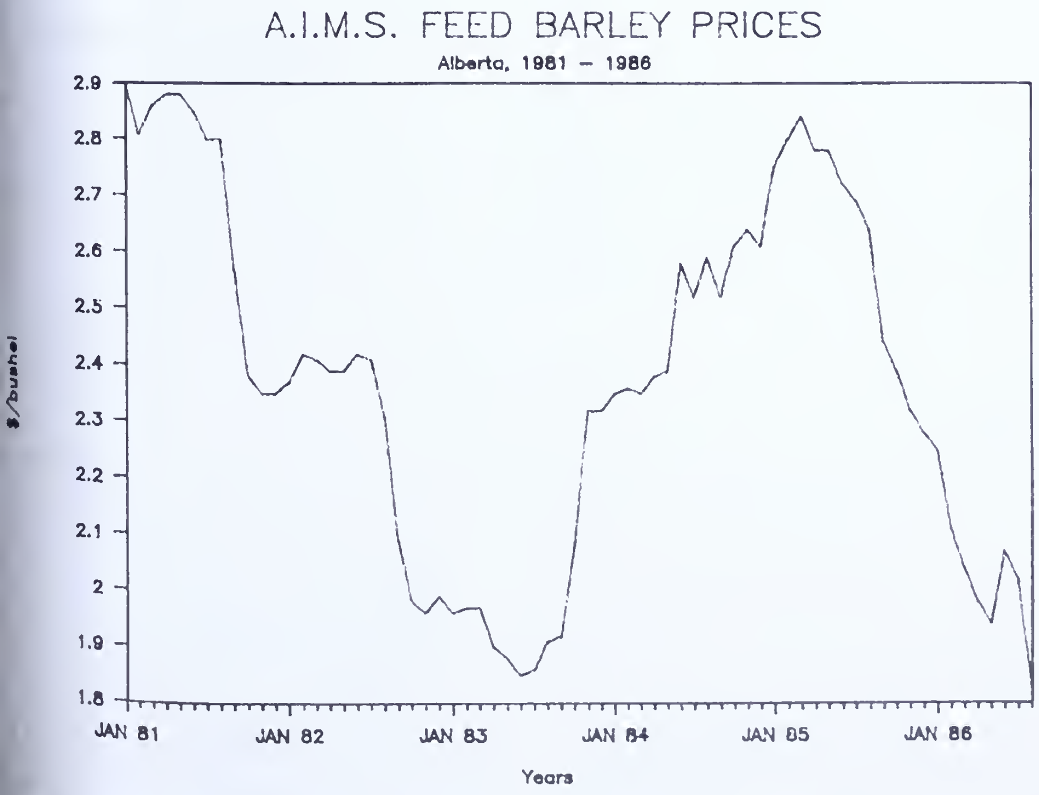

Graphs show where fuel and barley prices have gone since 1981

(Cont'd)

Farming costs decline (cont'd)

Under the Alberta Feed Grain Market Adjustment Program (AFGMAP), farmers are eligible for a rebate of $21 per tonne for grains used for feed. The decline in feed barley prices is attributed to ample supplies and declining world market prices for coarse grains.

Farmers are also paying substantially less for diesel fuel and purple gasoline this year. The average prices of these inputs for the first half of 1986 were 24 per cent and 27 per cent less than the comparable period in 1985.

Doubling of the Alberta Farm Fuel Rebate from 7¢ a litre to 14¢ a litre, combined with a decline in world oil prices have resulted in Alberta producers paying less for fuel now than they did in 1981.

For more information on Alberta farm input prices contact Maureen Whitlock, Statistics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Edmonton, 427-4011.

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Contact: Maureen Whitlock
427-4011

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta companies receive assistance

Four Alberta companies will receive more than $260,000 in assistance under the Canada/Alberta Agricultural Processing and Marketing Agreement.

The funding totalling $262,412 was announced recently by Federal Industry Minister Michel Cote and Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga.

The following firms have accepted assistance under the program:

- El Dorado Vegetable Farms Ltd. will use a contribution of $87,935 to establish a new product processing line for cello-wrapped vegetables at its Redcliff plant. Costing $283,600, the project is expected to create eight jobs.
- H & E Meats Corp. will use assistance of $73,106 to establish an abattoir at Edson. The project will cost an estimated $221,500 and is expected to create four jobs.
- Drummond Brewing Company Ltd. will further modernize its brewery at Red Deer with a contribution of $54,421. Total project costs are estimated to be $272,100.
- Alsask Processors Co. Ltd. will receive $46,950 to help modernize and expand its horse processing plant in Edmonton. The project will cost an estimated $313,000.

The Agricultural Processing and Marketing Agreement is jointly administered and equally funded by the federal Department of Regional Industrial Expansion (DRIE) and Alberta Agriculture.

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Contact: Dr. J.E. Wiebe
427-4287

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Hay auction offers a special feature

Livestock producers looking for winter feed should find all kinds of it at a first-of-its-kind hay auction in northeastern Alberta in late October.

The Lakeland Forage Association in association with Alberta Agriculture has organized its first hay auction for October 25 east of Bonnyville.

Different from most other auctions, all feed being sold that day will come with a feed test analysis showing nutritional value.

"They expect to have all qualities of hay for sale," says Bjorn Berg, a regional forage specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Vermilion.

"There should be feed there for the dairyman who is looking for the highest nutrient levels as well as hay suitable to beef cattlemen and horse owners."

The concept of providing a feed test analysis with each hay lot is to see if the dollar value of hay will change with nutritional value.

"Can high quality hay demand a higher price?" asks Berg. "If it does then it is also an indication to hay growers to be more conscious of cutting their hay when it reaches peak quality rather than going by volume."

The feed analysis will also provide a good reference point for livestock producers who are used to judging hay according to color, smell and leafiness. They'll be able to tell whether their observation techniques are an indication of true hay quality.

The association expects to have between 750 and 1,000 tons of hay and other feeds on site for the auction. All feed has been prepared in either large round bales or small square bales. It is all being sold by Imperial measure weight.

(Cont'd)

Prior to the sale, Alberta Agriculture specialists will offer a seminar on the auction grounds explaining the value of feed testing, interpreting the analysis and discussing how it fits with a feeding program.

It is also hoped to have a computer service available to provide personalized feeding recommendations based on the quality of feed purchased and the class of livestock being fed.

"The day will provide a good opportunity for farmers and ranchers to learn about feed analysis and nutritional requirements," says Berg. "There will be several specialists on hand able to provide advice."

The full day of events gets underway at 10 a.m.. Lunch will be availabl at the sale site, 9.5 kilometres east of Bonnyville on Secondary Road 659.

Anyone interested in consigning hay or other feed can contact Bruce Johnson at 826-7852 or Ray Murphy at 826-5477.

For details on the feeding and feed value seminar contact Bjorn Berg at 853-8109 or Ron Hockridge at 826-3388.

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Contact: Bjorn Berg
826-3388

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Review panel schedules informal meetings

After receiving 76 presentations at the formal hearings on ways in which crop insurance might be improved, the Alberta Crop Insurance Review Panel is catching its breath before beginning the final round of informal discussions with farmers.

Starting in mid-October the review panel will hold 38 meetings throughout the province. Producers and other interested persons are invited to attend. Written presentations are not required but are welcome. These meetings will give the panel members an opportunity to talk with farmers on how the crop insurance program might be improved to better meet their needs.

The meetings start in southern Alberta October 14 and wrap up November 15 in the Peace region. The review panel will divide into two teams to cover all communities in the five week time frame.

The review teams will hold three meetings the first day in Taber, Fort Macleod and Pincher Creek. All meetings throughout the schedule get underway at 9 a.m. except Pincher Creek which is an evening meeting. The last meeting of the schedule will be in Grande Prairie November 15.

The tight scheduling is necessary to meet the December deadline for the final report in time to make any changes in the insurance program for 1987.

"The panel felt it had very good response from the first round of hearings," says Raymond Stemp, co-ordinator. "Generally there is good support for the crop insurance program, although many of the presentations suggested some modifications."

Concerns expressed included coverage levels which in many instances will not cover input costs particularly with declining grain prices. Loss of good experience benefits resulting from widespread drought is also a concern.

(Cont'd)

Review panel schedules informal hearings (cont'd)

There was a plea to separate policies between irrigated and dry land crop production as well as spot loss coverage on a field or minimum acreage basis. Many felt that coverage levels based on one's own yields would better reflect individual farm performance and overcome some of the perceived abuses of the system. It was recognized that individual coverage is available now but has not been widely used.

Among those represented at the formal hearings were municipal districts, agricultural development committees, agricultural service boards, farm organizations, elevator companies and the Canadian Crop and Hail Corporation.

"Now that the panel has received input on some of the changes that may be needed it is hoped they can sit down with farmers at the less formal hearings and discuss these ideas," says Stemp.

"The panel will be looking for the general views of farmers as to whether changes are needed or not and will be interested in hearing any new ideas." For your information, a background paper on crop insurance is available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

The eight-member insurance review panel was created earlier this year by Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley Cripps. Its mandate is to develop recommendations to make the crop insurance program more responsive to the needs of farmers.

Along with Dallas Schmidt as chairman, panel members include four producers, Johnny Vos of Keg River, Eric Sikora of Warspite, Robert Hymas of Standard, Jerry Thacker of Burdett and three MLA's, Nigel Pengelly of Innisfail, Glen Clegg of Dunvegan and Robert (Butch) Fischer of Wainwright.

The schedule for the final round of hearings will be well publicized, although all those interested in making a presentation can contact any Alberta Agriculture district office for meeting locations in their area.

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Contact: Raymond Stemp
422-5876

(Editors: Attached is a schedule of insurance review panel hearings)

Alberta Crop Insurance Review Panel
Meeting Schedule

October 14-	Fort Macleod Scarlet & Gold Inn - Taber Taber Community Centre - Pincher Creek Elks Hall (7 p.m.)
October 15-	Vulcan Legion Hall - Medicine Hat Cypress Centre Stampede Grounds
October 16-	Strathmore Wheatland County Inn - Brooks Plainsman Motor Inn
October 17-	Three Hills Three Hills Community Centre - Airdrie Legion Hall
October 21-	Stettler Empress Gardens - Oyen Oyen Legion
October 22-	Drumheller Drumheller Inn - Hanna Legion Hall
October 23-	Coronation Elks Hall - Killam Legion Hall
October 24-	Wainwright Wainwright Communiplex - Camrose Norsemen Motor Inn Hotel
Ocotber 28-	Wetaskiwin Wayside Inn Innisfail Orange Hall
October 29-	Rimbey Prov. Building - Lacombe Agri. Building
October 30-	Drayton Valley Legion Hall - Stony Plain Holborn Hall
October 31-	Mayerthorpe Legion Hall - Westlock Legion Hall
November 4 -	St. Paul Sr. Citizen Club - Athabasca Community Centre
November 5 -	Vermilion Legion Hall - Smoky Lake Ukrainian Hall
November 6 -	Ft. Saskatchewan Energy & Chemical Workers Union Hall - Vegreville Homesteader Hotel
November 12-	Ft. Vermilion Legion Hall - Spirit River Legion Hall
November 13-	Manning Legion Hall - Falher Log Cabin
November 14-	Fairview Dunvegan Inn - High Prairie Elks Hall
November 15 -	Grande Prairie Motor Inn

(All meetings begin at 9 a.m. unless otherwise noted)

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Frost damaged canola seed can be used for hog feed

While canola hit by early frost can't be used for oil processing it can be a good source of high protein feed for feeder pigs, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Although green canola seed should not be fed to sows, it can be fed to 25 to 100 kilogram feeder pigs, says Sam Jaikaran, an animal nutritionist with the department in Edmonton.

"Judging from the number of calls received in the past weeks by the nutrition section of Alberta Agriculture it appears that this year there will be large quantities of frozen canola seed available for feeding to livestock," he says. "Feeder pigs can utilize quite economically up to 20 per cent of this seed in their feed. And the hog producers should be able to see some cost savings as well."

Frost damaged canola seed contains between 18 and 20 per cent protein and between 20 and 35 per cent oil depending on the degree of frost damage. The protein from ground canola seed is well digested by feeder pigs while the oil serves to increase the digestible energy of the ration.

"However limited research on feeding raw canola seed to sows show negative results, therefore feeding raw canola seed to sows should be avoided until more information is available, " says Jaikaran

Processing canola seed may present some difficulty because of the high oil content. It is recommended that canola seed be mixed at least half and half with barley before grinding.

"Frozen canola seed, when used as hog feed, may be worth 20 to 50 per cent more than barley because of its higher protein and energy," he says.

(Cont'd)

Frost damaged canola seed can be used for hog feed (cont'd)

Tables of feed formulas and estimated costs for using frozen canola seed are available from any district agriculturist. Formulas of grower and finisher feeds are available for use with barley containing 10, 11 or 12 per cent protein.

For more information on canola seed and feeding requirements contact any Alberta Agriculture district office.

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Contact: Sam Jaikaran
436-9150

(Editors: Attached are tables of feed formulas for using frozen canola seed in grower (25-50 kg) and finisher (50-100 kg) feeds. Feed formulas are given for use with barley containing either 10, 11 or 12 percent protein. There is also a feed cost shown which indicates ingredients cost only. The ingredient prices used are: barley $76, soymeal $335, canola seed $80 and grower premix $480).

Hog Grower (25-50 kg) With 10% Canola Seed

Ingredients	Barley Protein Content (%)		
	10	11	12
Barley	755	765	775
Soymeal	120	110	100
Canola Seed	100	100	100
Premix	25	25	25
Analyses			
D.E. Kcal/kg	3153	3146	3139
Protein %	14.97	15.37	15.80
Lysine %	0.74	0.74	0.74
Calcium %	0.63	0.63	0.63
Phosphorus %	0.61	0.61	0.61
Cost $	118.33	115.74	113.15

Hog Grower (25-50) With 15% Canola Seed

Ingredients	Barley Protein Content (%)		
	10	11	12
Barley	720	729	740
Soymeal	105	96	85
Canola Seed	150	150	150
Premix	25	25	25
Analyses			
D.E. Kcal/kg	3179	3172	3164
Protein %	14.88	15.29	15.64
Lysine %	0.74	0.74	0.74
Calcium %	0.64	0.64	0.64
Phosphorus %	0.62	0.62	0.62
Cost $	114.65	112.31	109.47

(Cont'd)

Hog Grower (25-50 kg) With 20% Canola Seed

Ingredients	Barley Protein Content (%)		
	10	11	12
Barley	686	694	705
Soymeal	89	81	70
Canola Seed	200	200	200
Premix	25	25	25
Analyses			
D.E. Kcal/kg	3204	3198	3190
Protein %	14.75	15.16	15.48
Lysine %	0.74	0.74	0.74
Calcium %	0.65	0.65	0.65
Phosphorus %	0.63	0.63	0.63
Cost $	110.70	108.63	105.78

Hog Finisher (50-100 kg) With 10% Canola Seed

Ingredients	Barley Protein Content (%)		
	10	11	12
Barley	793	802	814
Soymeal	82	73	61
Canola Seed	100	100	100
Premix	25	25	25
Analyses			
D.E. Kcal/kg	3126	3119	3110
Protein %	13.60	14.08	14.47
Lysine %	0.64	0.64	0.64
Calcium %	0.62	0.62	0.62
Phosphorus %	0.60	0.60	0.60
Cost $	108.49	106.16	103.05

(Cont'd)

Hog Finisher (50-100 kg) With 15% Canola Seed

Ingredients	Barley Protein Content (%) 10	11	12
Barley	758	767	779
Soymeal	67	58	46
Canola Seed	150	150	150
Premix	25	25	25
Analyses			
D.E. Kcal/kg	3151	3145	3136
Protein %	13.51	13.95	14.31
Lysine %	0.64	0.64	0.64
Calcium %	0.63	0.63	0.63
Phosphorus %	0.61	0.61	0.61
Cost $	104.80	102.47	99.36

Hog Finisher (50-100 kg) With 20% Canola Seed

Ingredients	Barley Protein Content (%) 10	11	12
Barley	724	732	743
Soymeal	51	43	32
Canola Seed	200	200	200
Premix	25	25	25
Analyses			
D.E. Kcal/kg	3176	3170	3162
Protein %	13.38	13.83	14.18
Lysine %	0.64	0.64	0.64
Calcium %	0.64	0.64	0.64
Phosphorus %	0.62	0.62	0.62
Cost $	100.86	98.79	95.94

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta marks Export Trade Month

Federal, provincial and local officials will be joining forces in October to increase public understanding and business awareness of the importance of exporting Canadian goods.

October is Export Trade Month in Canada and Alberta Agriculture, along with other provincial and municipal government departments, chambers of commerce and industry will be participating in a variety of programs.

Alberta food producers and processors are able to compete in almost any market in the world. The province's agriculture and food sector accounts for one-quarter of Canada's food production and over one-fifth of its agricultural and food exports.

More than $4 billion worth of food products were shipped out of Alberta in 1985. Of that amount, in excess of $2.3 billion was exported internationally to countries such as the United States, Japan, The United Kingdom, the U.S.S.R., the People's Republic of China, Brazil, East Germany and Mexico.

Getting Alberta based products into the world consumer's grocery cart is really the bottom line in the whole multi-billion dollar agriculture exercise. The province can have the best producers, on the best land, raising the best crops and livestock for the most efficient factory in the world, but if there is no demand for the product, the effort is lost.

To emphasize the importance of export trade, Alberta Agriculture, for the third year, is working with the provincial Department of Economic Development and the federal Department of Regional Industrial Expansion (DRIE) to organize an awareness program.

Among the events planned through October are trade shows, seminars on export trade, talks on export and trade issues and a media campaign.

(Cont'd)

Alberta marks Export Trade Month (cont'd)

"One of the highlights of Export Trade Month is the presentation of Export Achievement Awards," says Doug Bienert, trade director with Alberta Agriculture. "This program publicly recognizes, on an annual basis, individual firms and organizations who have demonstrated achievements in skill and initiatives in the export of their goods, services and technology."

For further information on Export Trade Month activities contact Doug Bienert at Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, 427-2441.

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Contact: Doug Bienert
427-2441

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Farm women's conference set for Grande Prairie

Registration should be made early for the annual Peace River region Farm Women's Conference set for November 19 and 20 in Grande Prairie.

Organized around the theme "Changes and Challenges", the conference can accommodate 250 women, says Therese Beaudoin, Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Falher.

Registration forms are available from any district home economist.

The conference gets underway November 19 at the Grande Prairie Inn with registration from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

"Come and pick up your name tag and registration package," says Beaudoin. "Have a coffee, meet someone new, say hi to old friends and make yourself comfortable for the keynote address. The focus is on "changes". What are our roots? How did we get where we are today?"

Also planned during the two day event is a broad select-a-session program covering topics ranging from renovating the farmstead to estate planning.

Sessions include talks on farm women today, farm women's organizations, operating a greenhouse, coping with financial stress, preparing meals for workers in the field, nutrition, being able to respond to an emergency, career planning and family violence.

The conference wraps up with a closing address on "challenges".

"This talk will give us a look at where we are going and how we will get there," says Beaudoin. "It will certainly send conference delegates home refreshed and full of new ideas.

"So take a well deserved fall break and join other farm women. Socialize, enjoy a banquet and charge up your batteries for another year."

For information on the conference contact your local district home economist.

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Contact: Therese Beaudoin
837-2211

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Dairy technologist appointed in Vermilion

Alberta Agriculture's northeast region has a new dairy production technologist.

Peter Kuperis, who received a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from the University of Alberta earlier this year, has joined the department's dairy division and will be based in Vermilion.

Born in Calgary, Kuperis grew up in the High River district and moved to the Barrhead area in 1979.

Prior to accepting his new post he gained practical experience over several summers working on dairy farms near Barrhead.

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Contact: David Domes
352-1223

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Timing critical for fall soil samples

Fall is a good time to collect and send soil samples for analysis but farmers should make sure it's done properly and under the right conditions, say specialists with Alberta Agriculture.

Timing is critical when taking fall samples to assess fertilizer application needs, especially nitrogen. If the soil is too warm when the sample is taken a farmer may not get an accurate picture of soil nitrogen levels.

"Crop uptake of nitrogen is closely related to the quantity of nitrate-nitrogen in the soil at seeding time," says Don Laverty, co-ordinator, special projects with the soils branch in Edmonton.

"Fall soil nitrogen levels can provide a good estimate of spring soil nitrogen supply if samples are taken after the surface soil has cooled to about 5° C or less."

Historically the surface soil, about the first 10 cm, should cool to 5°C or less by the first week of October for most of the province. In the southern region this normally might not occur until about mid-October.

To be absolutely sure, it's suggested that a farmer use a thermometer for an accurate reading.

Time of sampling or soil temperature isn't as critical for testing other nutrients such as phosphorous, potassium, sulphur (PKS) or soil pH, says Laverty.

"All the nutrients are important, but nitrogen is probably the key nutrient for plant growth," he says. "In terms of total crop requirements, it is the most costly and it is also most subject to large variations and losses."

The value of soil sampling shouldn't be underestimated. The recommendations resulting from the soil nutrient analysis can be the foundation of the fertilizer program as well as identifying other soil factors that may limit crop yield.

(Cont'd)

"A farmer's fertilizer bill can represent 50 per cent of crop input costs," says Laverty. "Fertilizer requirements can be adjusted markedly by the recommendations of the soil test.

"We often think about nitrogen but if some of the other essential nutrients are deficient then that can be equally damaging to plant growth and ultimately crop yield."

Not only the timing, but collecting a proper sample is important to obtain the best measure of soil nutrients.

"Depth of soil sampling is very important since crops can utilize nitrogen to a depth of 60 cm (24 inches) or more," says Len Kryzanowski, a soil specialist with the department in Edmonton. "Measuring soil nitrogen to 60 cm depth provides a more precise measure of available nitrogen for crops than just sampling the first 15 cm."

The first 15 cm (six inches) of soil represents about 25 per cent of the volume of soil used by a crop and it may contain 30 to 65 per cent of the available nitrogen, says Kryzanowski. The remaining 35 to 70 per cent of available nitrogen in the soil is below the 15 cm mark.

"If someone sent us a sample of the first 15 cm of soil we can make a general assumption of what nutrients lie below that to the 60 cm depth. But there is no precise way, other than testing, of knowing what's below 15 cm," he says. "This can ultimately lead to a large over or under estimation of the nitrogen supply, reducing the accuracy of the fertilizer recommendation."

Kryzanowski says if possible, samples should be taken in increments down to the full 60 cm of soil depth. Using a proper soil sampling tool the samples should be taken at intervals of 0-15 cm (0-six inches); 15-30 cm (six-12 inches) and 30-60 cm (12-24 inches).

"The different depths should be kept separate and properly dried," he says. "There should be about 15 to 20 subsamples from each field. The subsamples from each depth (such as all the 0-15 cm subsamples from one field) can be blended together and a representative sample of about 500 grams should be sent for analysis. Do the same for the subsamples from each depth."

(Cont'd)

Timing critical for fall soil samples (cont'd)

The specialists say farmers can probably come up with a general estimate of which fields or crops need the most fertilizer but there is no absolute measure without a soil analysis.

"Weather, previous crop removal, management and soil area can have a marked effect on soil nitrogen level and its distribution in the soil," says Laverty. "Regular soil sampling to account for these variations is recommended."

Although it's desirable it isn't practical for a farmer to be able to sample and have analysed soil from every field every year. But Laverty says a farmer should develop a soil sampling program which rotates the soil sampling process over all the fields every couple of years or so.

"Samples should be taken from all fields that have marked differences in management and crop history such as fallow versus cropped, manure application or legume plowdown," he says. "Beginning a program of soil testing can lead to a history of analysis and recommendations which can be useful in farm management and crop planning."

There are several private laboratories throughout the province that provide soil testing service. The Alberta Agriculture soil and animal nutrition laboratory also offers similar services. Soil samples plus complete field and crop history information should be submitted to one of these labs for analysis and fertilizer recommendation.

For further information on soil sampling or to obtain a soil sampling tool contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or fertilizer supply company.

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Contact: Don Laverty
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Len Kryzanowski
436-9150

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Barley production hits record level

With world barley supplies at near record levels, Alberta barley growers should be planning strategy now on how to market their grain over the next year.

Because of the large world surplus, prices aren't going to change significantly and with a record crop expected in Alberta, elevator delivery opportunities will be limited.

A farmer should search out all possible market opportunities and plan to make regular sales, hoping to catch the best price average over the year.

A specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton says farmers may have to rely on quantity to make up for what they lose on price.

"Producers should be aware there will be restrictive delivery opportunities through the elevator system for all feed grains this year," says Charlie Pearson, a grain market analyst with the department. "My advice is if a farmer has an opportunity to sell barley at current price levels he shouldn't hold back waiting for prices to improve."

The Canadian Wheat Board initial payment for No. 1 feed barley at Thunder Bay/Vancouver terminals has dropped from $110 a tonne during the 1985 - 1986 crop year to $80 a tonne this year.

This equates to Calgary and Edmonton, initial payments for No. 1 feed barley of about $65 a tonne.

"Non-board barley prices right now are close to the initial prices offered by the Canadian Wheat Board," says Pearson. "A highly price competitive world coarse grains market and a record Canadian barley crop year will keep the lid on prices and could force them down even further.

"There may be a little variation but it's not going to change a great deal," he says. "A farmer's going to have to use his own judgement. He should watch for opportunities and move barley when the prices seem realistic in light of market conditions."

(Cont'd)

Barley production hits record level (cont'd)

He says the Canadian Wheat Board will be offering a contracting program for barley and oats which should be investigated.

World-wide coarse grain production, which includes barley, corn oats and rye, is expected to be 822.3 million tonnes this year which is just under its 1985-86 record. There is also another 172.4 million tonnes of coarse grains being carried into this crop year from last year.

In spite of the United States cutting back acreage seeded to coarse grains, production still points to what is expected to be the second highest record harvest of 8.268 billion bushels this year.

The U.S. is expected to end the 1986-87 crop year with a carry-out of 135.6 million tonnes (5.339 billion bushels). This level of corn carryout would be over 83 per cent of the U.S. and 66 per cent of total world coars grain stocks.

Looking at Canadian barley figures, producers begin this crop year with a 3.19 million tonne carry-in from 1985-86 and production is estimated by Statistics Canada to hit a record 15.15 million tonnes this year.

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Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

September 29, 1986
For immediate release

Wheat surplus keeps prices down

If U.S. farmers hadn't planted one acre of wheat last spring theoretically they would have had almost enough wheat in storage to meet their domestic and export needs in 1986-87.

That's one indication of just how much surplus grain there is out there that's forcing wheat prices to record lows.

With world wheat production near an all-time high and Canada itself expected to harvest a record crop this year, there isn't too much hope for improved wheat prices until at least the 1987-88 crop year.

This isn't exactly the news Alberta grain producers wanted to hear but they should be aware of the scope of the problem and manage their grain deliveries accordingly, says a market analyst with Alberta Agriculture.

"It is important for prairie farmers to be aware of the large world wheat surplus out there and understand the influence the supply has on world prices," says Charlie Pearson, grain market analyst with the market analysis branch, in Edmonton.

Pearson estimates, with current information, Canadian farmers will be able to sell about 80 per cent of the 1986 crop. He says they can expect restrictive quotas to be set for wheat in the coming year.

The world-wide wheat supply situation in this crop year is nearing record levels although the 505 million tonne production estimate falls short of the record 515.6 million tonnes of wheat produced in the 1984-85 crop year.

The carryover has been increasing steadily each year growing from 78 million tonnes in 1981-82 to 123 million tonnes at the end of the 1985-86 crop year.

U.S. carryover from year to year has increased from 989 million bushels in 1981-82 to a record 1.8 billion bushels being carried into the 1986-87 crop year.

(Cont'd)

Wheat surplus keeps prices down (cont'd)

This year's U.S. harvest is estimated at 2.121 billion bushels which is actually the lowest production since 1978-79.

But the carry-in of U.S. wheat into the current crop year alone, would have nearly met all domestic and export needs this year.

According to Statistics Canada, Canadian farmers are expected to produce a record 31.32 million tonnes of wheat this year. The carryover from last year is 8.54 million tonnes.

The analyst says there is some good news coming from statistics. It is expected for the first time in eight years the world will consume all the grain it produces this year, so it shouldn't add to the existing surplus.

As the old crop year ended July 31 and the new one began August 1 the price of No. 1 CWRS wheat (Thunder Bay/Vancouver) dropped from $160 a tonne to $130. Thius results in a Calgary/Edmonton price of about $116 per tonne for this grade of wheat.

Pearson does not expect there will be any interim payment this crop year.

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Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

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October 6, 1986

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This Week

Chipewyan Indians harvest first potatoes............................1
Harold Hanna back in Edmonton....................................4
Survey shows range of silage operation rates........................6
Bats in your belfry?..7
Think again about keeping that open cow............................9
Warble infestation continues to decline............................10
Weather specialist appointed.......................................13
Turning a profit at the community hall.............................14
Mexico interested in Alberta's agriculture.........................17
Major projects announced for Alberta...............................19
Nitrogen fertilizer can be applied in the fall.....................21

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Chipewyan Indians harvest first potatoes

One of Alberta's most northern Indian bands may be starting a new trend of eating better and saving money, this winter, thanks to a trial gardening project near the shores of Lake Athabasca.

With the advice and help of an Alberta Agriculture specialist, the Chipewyan Indians are expecting to harvest nearly nine tons of potatoes grown on three separate blocks near the town of Fort Chipewyan, 700 kilometres north of Edmonton.

The harvest of home-grown produce is breaking new ground for the 1,600 residents of the community who rely on all food supplies, sold at two local grocery stores, to be flown or floated into the Lake Athabasca community.

The success of the trial potato harvest could mean that not only potatoes but other hearty vegetables such as carrots, cabbage, peas, and broccoli could be grown here for local consumption.

Because the locally grown vegetables would be cheaper they would be more readily included in the diet of reserve residents and contribute to improved health conditions, say band officials.

Fort Chipewyan is an isolated community just outside the east boundary of Wood Buffalo National Park on the southwest shore of Lake Athabasca. Just across the bay from the town site is the sprawling delta where the Athabasca River empties into the 200-mile-long lake that stretches northeast into Saskatchewan.

The community is the headquarters of two Indian bands - the Crees with a population of about 1,200 and the Chipewyans with about 300 people.

A land of lakes and rivers, the primary access in or out of Fort Chipewyan is a 10 to 12 hour boat ride on the Athabasca River to Fort McMurray or the daily two-hour Time Air flight from Edmonton.

Although there are vehicles used in and around the community, the road access is limited to two winter roads, one that goes north to Hay River and a new road to be opened this winter down to Fort McMurray.

(Cont'd)

The idea of growing a potato crop was developed by Chipewyan band manager John Rigney who sought the advice of Alberta Agriculture vegetable specialist Phil Dixon at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton.

"I received a call from the band administrator asking for my advice on whether potatoes would grow and how to go about it," says Dixon who has just returned from helping with the start of the late-September harvest.

Relying on produce shipped in from Edmonton or California, Fort Chipewyan shoppers are faced with high food bills because of transportaion costs.

"Potatoes can reach a high of 90 cents a pound in the local stores which really begins to hurt when you consider a 100 pound sack costs $90," says Dixon. "The band is hoping they can develop a cheaper source for some of this produce. The community has high unemployment and generally low incomes. Less expensive produce would help improve nutrition as well."

Noting that this year's demonstration got off to a late start, Dixon helped band members seed the first potato patch in mid-June with Norland, a standard early red potato variety.

One plot is near the town site, while two other plots are out on the reserve about 30 miles south of Fort Chipewyan along the Athabasca River.

The ground was overgrown with grass and brush and had to be dug by hand before a rototiller could be used to work the soil.

Accessible only by boat, the plots were tended by a band work crew during the summer and barely escaped damage from the July flood which raised havoc with farmland and communities in north-central Alberta.

"The crop was planted a little too late and it didn't have a chance to mature before frost," says Dixon. "What they were getting in late September was like the new potatoes they dig around Edmonton in late July.

"But it's estimated they were getting about eight tons to the acre which is pretty good. All together this year from these three plots they should harvest about nine tons."

(Cont'd)

The potatoes will be loaded on a scow owned by the band and taken to Fort Chipewyan where the produce is expected to be sold at the dock for about 40 cents a pound.

As with many other band projects, Chipewyan officials hope to prove the project over two or three years and then turn it over as a private business to a reserve member.

"Next year they have plans to expand the potato crop and plant other vegetables suitable to conditions here," says Dixon. "The idea is not only to grow cheaper produce, but to develop a business for someone here who wants to take on the job as a commercial vegetable grower."

He expects that with an earlier start, improved soil conditions and a more accurate fertilizer application that the project will be even more successful next year.

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Contact: Phil Dixon
973-3351

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Harold Hanna back in Edmonton

The man who headed the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) in Camrose for the past four and a half years has returned to Edmonton to assume a familiar role.

Harold Hanna, who served as chairman of ADC since April 1982, has accepted a post as assistant deputy minister of agriculture responsible for production.

Before joining ADC, Hanna served from 1974 to 1982 as the assistant deputy minister responsible for marketing and economic services.

In making the announcement Alberta Agriculture Deputy Minister Ben McEwen said he was pleased to welcome Hanna to the new post.

"During the eight years that Harold Hanna served as assistant deputy minister responsible for marketing and economic services, he made a valued contribution to the department," said McEwen.

"I am pleased to welcome him back to our office and I know that his experience with the Agricultural Development Corporation will be beneficial in his new role."

The deputy minister noted that Hanna's background will also help strengthen the tie between senior levels of Alberta Agriculture and ADC.

As well as having, many other career accomplishments, Hanna was recently instrumental in planning and launching the $2 billion Alberta Farm Credit Stability Program which was announced earlier this year. In his new post he will continue to oversee this program.

The new ADM said he was pleased to be back with the department in Edmonton and is prepared for the new challenge.

"I am looking forward to assuming the responsibilities of the office of the assistant deputy minister of production," said Hanna.

"I hope to provide leadership and foster a climate in which government and industry work together to further improve the efficiency and profitability of our farms.

(Cont'd)

"Working together hopefully we can take advantage of the long-term strength and potential of the agricultural industry in Alberta."

In welcoming Hanna, the deputy minister also acknowledged the "excellent effort and contribution" of Dr. Ralph Christian who served as acting assistant deputy minister from February to mid-September this year.

Christian, who now returns to being fulltime director of the department's animal health division, was named acting ADM following the retirement of Morley Douglas.

In Camrose, long-time ADC board member Gloria Paquette has been appointed acting chairman of the corporation.

Paquette has been a board member since 1973 and has been a member of various subcommittees over the years.

The interim appointment serves to provide continuity in the corporation's activities until the recently announced review of the role and mandate of ADC has been completed.

The review announced in August by associate agriculture minister Shirley Cripps is being headed by Didsbury farmer and economist Lloyd Quantz.

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Contact: Harold Hanna
427-2436

October 6, 1986

For immediate release

Survey shows range of silage operation rates

The 1986 survey results of custom charges for silage operations are now available from Alberta Agriculture.

Compiled by Maureen Whitlock of the statistics branch, the rates were obtained through a direct survey of Alberta operators providing the services.

The survey indicates charges vary within the province depending on local and field conditions and length of haul.

General figures show the cost for cutting, chopping and hauling ranged from $20 to $30 per ton.

Cutting costs ranged from $7 to $10 per acre or $45 to $60 per hour. Chopping rates were $100 to $125 per hour or $3.50 to $5.75 per wet ton. Hauling from the field to storage within 15 miles was $30 to $35 per hour or $3.80 to $4.40 per wet ton. Packing the pit added $40 to $50 per hour.

For additional information or a copy of the full survey, contact Garth Nickorick, farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0,(403) 556-4247.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Bats in your belfry?

If you hear squeaks or fluttering noises in the attic at night your house has probably become home to bats.

And you will likely continue to play host to the nocturnal creatures until you bat-proof the house, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Because bats return to the same site year after year the problem isn't likely to go away for very long, says Dr. Mike Dorrance, head of the problem wildlife section in Edmonton.

To bat-proof a house the homeowner has to seal all cracks and openings larger than one-quarter inch to prevent entry by the winged mammals. The best time to bat-proof is late September or October after bats have left for the year.

All bats in Alberta are migratory says the specialist. Bats spend summer in one location and winter in another. They live on insects, so they must either fly south for the winter as birds do, or hibernate. Even bats that hibernate will usually rear their young in one location and winter in another.

"Excluding bats from buildings is the soundest long-term solution to a bat problem," says Dorrance. "Seal tiny, inconspicuous holes larger than one-quarter inch. In older houses, openings occur where wood has warped, shrunk or decayed.

"Bats may also enter loose vents, flashing and eaves, or openings around windows, electrical outlets and water pipes. Caulking compound, screen, metal flashing, weatherstripping or similar material can seal all these."

(Cont'd)

Other steps can be taken but they are only stopgap measures, says the specialist.

Bats can sometimes be driven from an attic with naphthalene flakes, commonly known as moth balls. Also, floodlights strung in the attic will sometimes cause the bats to leave. Where windows or doors can be opened, a strong breeze from an electric fan will sometimes repel bats.

"These methods will only give temporary relief, however, and should not be used in the spring and early summer when young bats are unable to fly," says Dorrance.

For more information on bats and bat-proofing, a publication called Bats of Alberta (Agdex 684-8), is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, the Publications Office, at 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6 or from Alberta Fish and Wildlife division offices.

Additional control information is available from the department's regional problem wildlife specialists.

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Contact: Mike Dorrance
427-5370

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Think again about keeping that open cow

Open cows coming off grass this fall may look like a good prospect to push some cheap feed into before shipping for sale, but is this really the case?

Income expected from the sale of 50 to 100 extra pounds of beef may or may not be worth the effort, according to Garth Nickorick with Alberta Agriculture.

Sale price and grade should be considered in addition to feed costs, says the economist with the farm business management branch in Olds.

A cull cow with a little extra fleshing may bring a 2¢ to 3¢ a pound more. If the feed cost per pound of gain is 40¢ and sale price is 53¢ a pound, the extra return on the 100 pounds gained is $13 plus the 2¢ a pound premium on 1100 pounds or $22. This means a total $35 a head increase in return per cow.

But while the weight gain is occurring the price of cows may change.

"A price rise is more than welcome," says Nickorick. "But a price decline of 3¢ a pound pretty well wipes out the weight and condition gains. In such an event this producer would have been better off selling after weaning."

Since the expected weight gain is a small portion of the total sale weight, adverse price swings can quickly wipe out the benefits of a plan to put on the extra weight.

"Cheap feed prospects should not be used to cut out pregnancy testing this season," says Nickorick. "The feed bill does not look as cheap considering the open cow's next calf is a year and a half away."

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Warble infestation continues to decline

For the fifth consecutive year the number of warbles found on slaughter cattle in Alberta has declined, dropping this year to less than 1 per cent.

Compared with 1968 when 44 per cent of slaughter cattle were infested with warble grubs, the 1986 figures show only 0.5 per cent of carcasses checked by federal inspectors at packing plants showed signs of warbles.

Data from auction market inspections and on-farm inspections confirm this information.

This year's infestation level of 0.5 per cent is down from the 1985 level of 1.4 percent.

Dr. Ali Khan, livestock pest control specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, says the success of the warble control program is a tribute to livestock producers and the fieldmen who carry out warble control programs in Alberta's 66 agricultural service board areas.

Nearly every stage of the life cycle of the warble fly causes some harm to cattle, although the grubs, the larvae of warble flies, are among the most harmful parasites.

After hatching on the hair of the animal, cattle grubs move through the animal's body for seven to nine months before forming warbles in its back.

The insects can cause a variety of problems for livestock. The flies themselves can be a nuisance to cattle and can affect rate of gain and livestock performance. The grubs can cause a loss of weight and digestive disorders in cattle. Infected livestock do not finish as well and warbles damage flesh and hide.

The only effective control is to kill the grubs in the animal's body. Treating the cattle with systemic insecticide kills the grubs before they do much damage or form warbles on the animal's back. These insecticides also kill the grubs in the warbles and a few other internal and external parasites of cattle.

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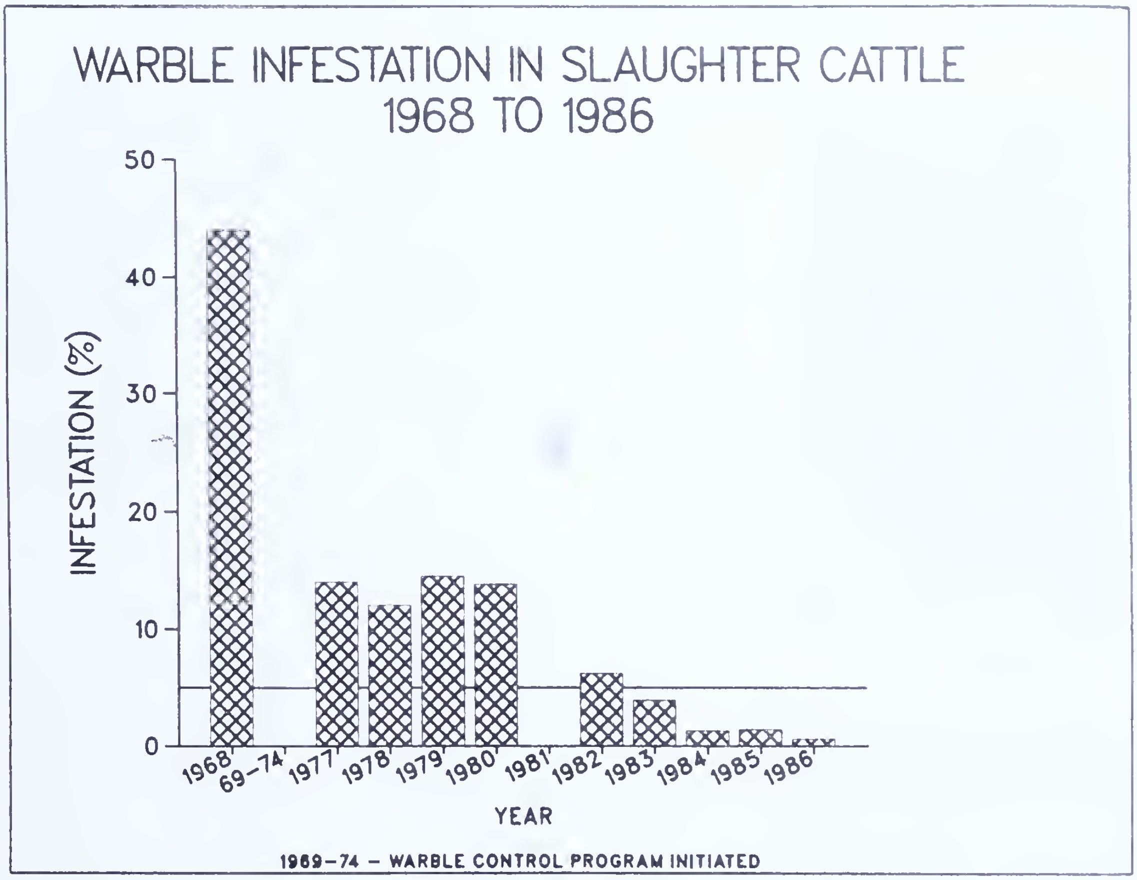


Chart shows the decline in warble infestation in cattle since 1968

Alberta's warble control program began in 1968. In spite of the low percentages reported this year, Dr. Khan urges farmers not to let up in their efforts to control warbles because even one or two escaping flies can infest an entire herd.

"The cost of warble control is only 50 to 60 cents per head, while in a herd where treatment is neglected, losses can be five to six times that high," says Khan.

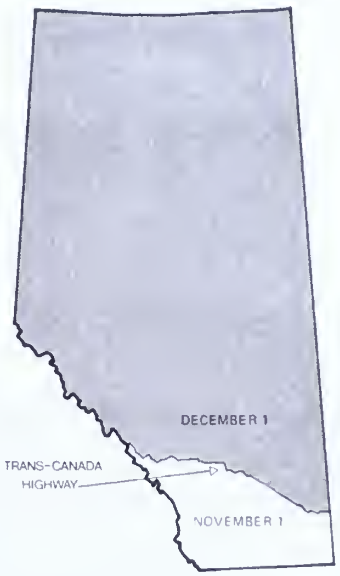
(Cont'd)

Warble infestation continues to decline (cont'd)

"A return of $5 for every $1 spent in prevention is very attractive these days," he says.

Insecticides in the fall will effectively control cattle grubs. For Alberta the last date for safe treatment south of the Trans-Canada Highway No. 1 is November 1 and for the area north of the highway, December 1.

For more information on the warble control program contact any Alberta Agriculture district office.



Map shows cutoff dates for cattle grub treatment.

Contact: Dr. Ali Khan
427-9051

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Weather specialist appointed

A former weather specialist with the Nova Scotia government has accepted a position with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

Peter Dzikowski, who spent nearly six years as an agricultural climatologist with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Marketing has joined the conservation and development branch as an agricultural weather resource specialist.

The announcement was made by David Neilson, head of the farm water management section.

Dzikowski was born and raised in Hamilton and earned a bachelor of science degree, majoring in biology, from McMaster University in 1973. He received a master of science degree in agrometeorology from the University of Guelph in 1980.

Gaining farm experience through several farm-related summer jobs, Dzikowski also has several years experience working on muck soils, growing a range of horticultural crops.

In his new post, the specialist will provide advice on the influence of weather and climate on agriculture, and answer any questions about farm weather services relating to agriculture in Alberta.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Turning a profit at the community hall

The community kitchen which can often be a pain to work in because it's too small or needs upgrading could, with good planning, become a real moneymaker for an agricultural society or association.

In the community halls in Alberta which range from schools and church basements to brand new recreation or agricultural complexes the kitchens are often a limiting factor.

"A kitchen that is too small, poorly laid out, or just doesn't have good equipment can be a real nightmare to work in," says Donna Bagdan Alberta Agriculture's housing specialist in Edmonton.

"Many agricultural societies in Alberta have found by doing some proper planning and upgrading their kitchen facilities they can turn their facility into a real moneymaker."

As examples Bagdan noted three ag societies that have exemplary kitchens and in less than three years paid off the debt of their new building. In some cases the kitchen facility had earned enough money to pay for other community hall expansion and upgrading projects.

St. Michael's Agricultural Society, northeast of Edmonton, in 1982 planned kitchen facilities in its new complex which can handle food preparation for 450 people, says the specialist. Within 16 months they had paid for the building. And since then they have added a meeting room and senior citizen's facility, all paid for by the kitchen.

Saskatoon Lake Agricultural Society near Grande Prairie and St. Lina Agricultural Society near St. Paul, again, found their community kitchens again paid for themselves and the debt of the total facility in about three years. These facilities can handle between 300 and 350 people.

"And these halls don't have to operate seven days a week to have this kind of success," she says. "They are used anywhere from once a week to 40 times a year."

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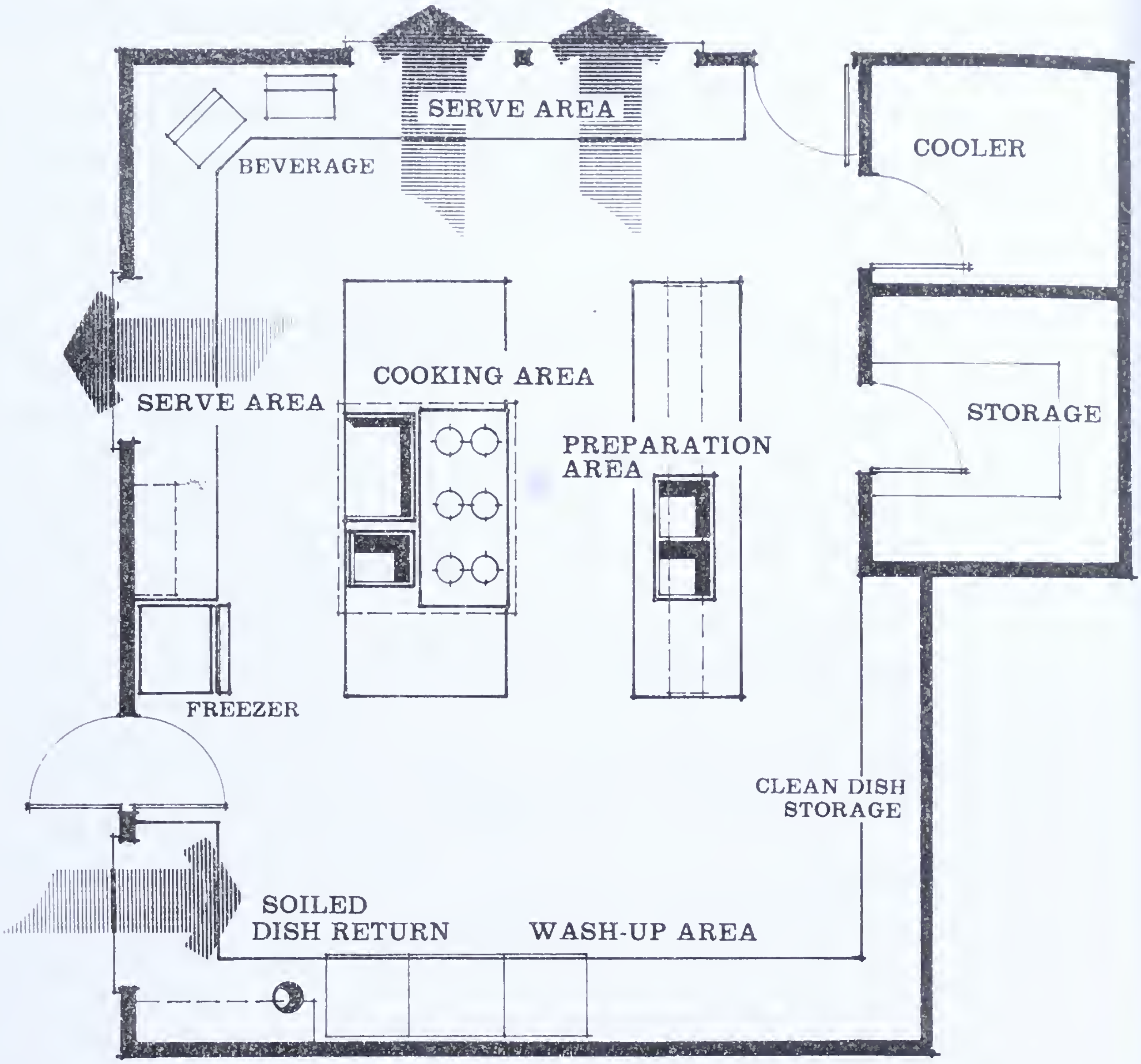
SERVE AREA
BEVERAGE
COOLER
COOKING AREA
SERVE AREA
STORAGE
PREPARATION AREA
FREEZER
CLEAN DISH STORAGE
SOILED DISH RETURN
WASH-UP AREA

Every community kitchen is unique. As this example shows, a good food service facility is planned for ease of work and enjoyment by workers. Properly located, sized and equiped work centres promote efficiency.

(Cont'd)

Turning a profit at the community hall (cont'd)

"Most of these community kitchens are operated by volunteer help. One organization for example has a list of 100 volunteers and when an event is booked they just go down the list until they get enough people to handle that event. But if they have good facilities to work with the volunteers don't mind coming out."

Bagdan says community kitchens should be kept in good condition just like any other public food service which has to meet health inspection standards.

She says if a kitchen needs work, the community hall board might as well go all the way and make it serviceable and efficient.

As part of the planning process Bagdan says it is important for the hall board and planning committee to get away from the idea of the home kitchen and think commercial.

"If you are looking for a kitchen that will handle a large crowd and has several people working in it, you can't think about a residential stove and handwashing dishes.

"The traffic patterns in the community hall kitchens have to minimize conflict and confusion, and food preparation areas, for example, have to be kept separate from cleanup areas."

A new commerical stove can cost $8,000 and a commerical dishwasher $16,000 but reconditioned units are often available from restaurant suppliers, she says.

Any community group considering new or improved food service facilities should form a planning committee and contact their district home economist for advice and information.

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Contact: Donna Bagdan
427-2181

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Mexico interested in Alberta's agriculture

Mexico has more to offer Albertans than warm beaches when snow is drifting across the prairies.

It is is becoming a major market for Alberta livestock and canola seed and producers in this province hope it stays that way.

Alberta's associate minister of agriculture will be in Mexico later this month to sign agreements with that country indicating the growing trade relationship between the two governments.

Associate agriculture minister Shirley Cripps will lead an Alberta delegation of producers to a livestock show in Guadalajara, October 23, where the two agreements will be signed.

The first document is considered a protocol agreement setting out areas of co-operation between Mexico and Alberta, while the other working agreement sets out responsibilities in a joint bull testing program.

Along with the sale of about $2 million worth of purebred Alberta beef cattle to Mexico in 1985 and another $355,000 worth of purebred stock this year, that country also imported about 145,000 tonnes of Canadian canola seed, in 1986, mostly from Alberta producers.

Alberta Agriculture trade director Doug Bienert says as Mexican confidence in Alberta livestock, products and technology grows so will Alberta exports.

Under the bull testing program 17 Alberta beef bulls were shipped to Mexico earlier this year. Breeds represented included Saler, Limousin, Maine-Anjou, Simmental, Gelbvieh, Chianina, Blonde d'Aquitaine, Pinzgauer, Shorthorn, Tarentaise, Welsh Black and Galloway.

Working with the Cattleman's Union of Guadalajara, the trade director says the bulls will be tried in breeding programs on selected herds on Mexican ranches.

(Cont'd)

Mexico interested in Alberta's agriculture (cont'd)

Alberta breeding sires will be placed with 25 native Zebu (Brahma) cows. The choice of bull to each ranch will be left to the discretion of the Mexican agriculture department and the cattlemen's union.

There will also be an additional 25 Zebu breeding cows that will be bred by their native Zebu bulls on each ranch so that comparisions can be made.

The program is being monitored to determine ease of calving, weights of calves, rate of gain and weaning weights with a comparison between Alberta and Zebu sires.

"We are optimistic the results of tests will prove very favorable for our beef breeding bulls and hopefully will generate some sales for our Alberta livestock breeders," says Bienert.

Looking at canola seed exports, Bienert says Mexican processors are interested in both vegetable oil and canola meal.

The low cholestrol vegetable oil is popular as a consumer product although the canola meal is new to Mexico as a livestock feed.

"From the 145,000 tonnes of canola seed they imported from western Canada last year they produced 80,000 tonnes of canola meal," says Bienert. "We have already done studies with their poultry and swine industry and have convinced them canola meal is a good feed.

"We are planning to undertake feeding trials with beef and dairy cattle this fall and if those results are favorable, as we suspect, then we will be able to expand the use of canola meal as a livestock feed."

Working with Mexican processors on the study is Dr. Alfredo Newell, who earlier worked for Alberta Agriculture as a regional swine specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge.

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Contact: Doug Bienert
427-4241

October 6, 1986
For immediate release

Major projects announced for Alberta

A University of Alberta research company and a multinational food processor are among the companies in Alberta that will share more than $1.6 million from a joint federal/provincial assistance program.

In recent announcements, Chembiomed Ltd., owned by the U of A and McCain Foods Limited, will receive assistance totalling $1.5 million as they invest about $21 million to build new facilities in two separate projects.

Four other smaller Alberta firms will share $112,150 in assistance as they invest $537,000 in building or expanding their food manufacturing and processing operations.

The assistance money for all projects was provided under the Canada-Alberta Agricultural Processing and Marketing Agreement. The announcements were made by Michel Cote, Federal Industry Minister and Charles Mayer, minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga.

Chembiomed Ltd., will receive $944,856 under the assistance program as it builds a new $16 million research and development facility in Edmonton.

The assistance money is a contribution toward the portion of the facility that will be used for research applicable to agricultural processing. It is expected research work in this area will create 12 new jobs.

Owned by the university, the company is engaged in research, development and commercialization of health care and veterinary products. The company now occupies several buildings at the university and will move its entire operation to the new facility being built in the Edmonton Research and Development Park.

McCain Foods Limited, the New Brunswick-based multinational company will receive $584,925 in assistance to establish a $5 million juice processing plant in Calgary.

(Cont'd)

Major projects announced for Alberta (cont'd)

The Calgary plant will process and package asceptic juices and other beverages. It will be McCain's tenth food-processing operation in Canada. The new facility is expected to employee 43 people.

Under the same agreement four other Alberta processing firms will receive $112,150 in assistance for their projects.

Abougouche Bros. Enterprises Ltd. will use $47,193 to establish an in-store bakery in Lac La Biche. The cost of the project is estimated $181,512 and is expected to create five jobs.

Van's Sausage Co. Ltd. in Edmonton will expand its operation with assistance totalling $32,493. The $216,623 expansion project will allow the company to process sausages, meat pies, bulk weiners and pizza. It is expected to create seven jobs.

Frank's Bakery in Spirit River has accepted $22,264 in assistance to establish a new bakery. The facility which is estimated to cost $71,820 will create three new jobs.

And a Bashaw meat processor will use $10,200 in assistance to expand its operation. Kikel Meats anticipates its $68,000 expansion with create two additional jobs.

The Agricultural Processing and Marketing Subsidiary Agreement is jointly administered and equally funded by the Federal Department of Regional Industrial Expansion (DRIE) and Alberta Agriculture.

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Contact: Dr. Jim Wiebe
427-4287

October 6, 1986

For immediate release

Nitrogen fertilizer can be applied in the fall

Many farmers find fall is a convenient time to apply fertilizer, but to make the best of this opportunity requires some important decision making, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Research has shown if nitrogen fertilizer is to be applied in the fall, late fall banding is best. Losses can occur when nitrogen is applied through the broadcast method or if fertilizer is banded too early in the fall when soil is still warm.

Research has also shown soil tests provide a better estimate of nitrogen requirement when taken in late fall after soil temperatures have dropped below 7° C.

Since it usually takes two to four weeks after samples are submitted to get soil tests results, there is not enough time to get the recommended fertilizer applied before winter.

Doug Penney, a soil specialist with the department in Edmonton, says this apparent time conflict need not prevent the effective use of soil tests and fall application of nitrogen.

The soil fertility supervisor says while fall soil samples are submitted for analysis, the farmer shouldn't hold up operations waiting for the results.

"Farmers should be able to look at their fields at this time of year, review past cropping and management practices and estimate nitrogen reserves," says Penney.

"For example if it is a clean, well fallowed field he can probably assume it has good nitrogen reserves. If it has has been continuously cropped the last few years and he has applied moderate rates of nitrogen fertilizer, he can probably assume that it has low nitrogen reserves and therefore a high nitrogen requirement."

(Cont'd)

Nitrogen fertilizer can be applied in the fall (cont'd)

Partial fallow, legume plow down, and fields that have received manure in recent years will tend to have intermediate nitrogen reserves. It is more difficult to estimate the nitrogen status of fields in the intermediate category. Nitrogen application to these fields should be delayed until soil test results are available.

Fields estimated to have a low nitrogen reserve are the best choice for applying nitrogen in fall without the benefit of a soil test. The rate of application can be on the conservative side and then fine-tuned in the spring using the soil test results and other current information such as soil moisture reserves and crop prices.

In many cases the fertilizer requirements can be fine-tuned by choosing an appropriate fertilizer blend for drill-in application at planting.

For further information on fall fertilizer application contact Doug Penney at 427-5346 or an Alberta Agriculture district office.

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Contact: Doug Penney
427-5346

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AGRI-NEWS

October 13, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Wet September causes harvesting problems.............................1

Canola harvest faces problems...3

Ken Spiller appointed director..6

Four methods available to control grubs..............................8

Assistance program deadline nears.....................................9

Alberta completes embryo sale to Russia..............................11

Little change in haying rates..14

Fort Macleod man among nominees......................................15

Moisture management focus of Calgary conference......................16

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Wet September causes harvesting problems

Precipitation totals from two to three times the normal amount for September have caused harvesting problems throughout Alberta.

Peter Dzikowski, agricultural weather resource specialist with Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch, says a September this wet is likely to occur only a few times in a century.

What made this September so difficult for farmers was not only the amount of precipitation, but also the many days with rain, he says.

The number of days with measurable precipitation was double the normal for parts of Alberta south of Calgary, where it rained two days out of three.

In central Alberta and the southern Peace River area, the number of days with precipitation was 50 per cent above average, with most places reporting rain one day out of two.

The northern Peace and north-eastern Alberta were considerably drier, with High Level reporting 17 mm of precipitation, only 50 per cent of their normal total for September.

Northeast of Edmonton, below normal monthly precipitation has reduced soil moisture reserves and caused declines in pasture productivity.

In contrast, Medicine Hat reported a record high September precipitation total of 197 mm, over six times the normal value of 32.4 mm. Over half of this record high precipitation fell from a storm on September 24 and 25.

The precipitation recorded September 25 in many southeastern Alberta locations exceeded the total precipitation normally expected for the entire month.

(Cont'd)

"This heavy rainfall was a crippling blow to the southeastern area which had been plagued by persistent rainfall most of the month, and which prevented harvesting operations," says Dzikowski. "It may only be small relief to farmers that soil moisture reserves were replenished."

For further information contact Dzikowski at the conservation and development branch in Edmonton at 422-4385.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Canola harvest faces problems

Although Alberta canola growers are facing some problems this fall it is too early to panic, says the president of the canola growers association.

Peace River farmer Marcel Maisonneuve says there is a lot of canola out in the field, but if the weather breaks and farmers have 10 good days, a potential disaster could be quickly reversed.

"Canola is probably one of the best crops to withstand the wet weather," he says. "Some of the pods may shell out, but if the curing process continues and we can gain one more grade on quality, you can soon make up for any losses.

"We are concerned about the situation, but I think it is too early to panic. There have been many years we have harvested canola late into October and had good results. We'll just have to wait and see what happens."

Maisonneuve, who farms south of Falher, is president of the 1,200 member Alberta Canola Growers' Association.

Along with weather, a major concern facing farmers is a crop maturity problem known as green canola seed. There are a couple major influences which can cause the problem, but the bottom line is that about 40 per cent of Alberta's canola crop will be below top grade because it hasn't matured or cured properly. This results in reduced quality and reduced value as an oilseed.

There were 3.088 million acres of canola planted in Alberta this year with a record harvest averaging 24 bushels per acre expected. In early October 90 per cent of the crop had been swathed but only about 34 per cent had been harvested, according to the Alberta Wheat Pool.

"And from the acreage that has been harvested many farmers are finding a problem of green canola seed," says Phil Thomas, Alberta Agriculture's provincial oilseed specialist in Lacombe.

(Cont'd)

Canola harvest facing problems (cont'd)

Usually 90 per cent of the Alberta canola seed harvest is rated as Canada Rapeseed No. 1. This is well-formed, fully matured seed with good oil content.

Projections are that only 59 per cent of this year's potential 74 million bushels of canola will be classed as No. 1. About 28 per cent will be No. 2 seed; 10 per cent will be No. 3 and 3 per cent will be rated as sample.

"Some farmers have said when it dries up they are just going to burn their fields," says Thomas. "But I would caution farmers not to act too fast. Even No.3 or sample seed is worth something. I would suggest farmers look at the options before they do anything drastic."

In central Alberta the canola crop got off to a poor start as a freak May blizzard struck the area followed by hot dry conditions which resulted in uneven germination and forced some replanting of crops.

Then rainfall across the province in July actually put all crops in good shape, setting the stage for a record harvest.

"Although central and southern Alberta were probably about two weeks behind the Edmonton area and Peace River region, all crops were looking pretty good," says Thomas.

But then the tables turned again.

Canola seed is properly matured when the seed reaches about 20 per cent moisture. As the seeds cure, they lose moisture and break down chlorophyll, the green color pigments in the seed.

If they don't mature properly the chlorophyll remains in the seed. When the seed is crushed the raw oil is off-color requiring extra processing to purify. An immature seed also has less oil content than a properly cured seed.

The major causes of green canola seed are an early frost or extremely hot and dry conditions late in the growing season both of which can affect the curing process.

(Cont'd)

"From Calgary north to Wetaskiwin there were reports of frost as early as August 5. In the Edmonton-Legal-Morinville area farmers there reported frost as early as August 8," says Thomas.

"Also in some parts of the province conditions were very dry in early August and we suspect it forced seeds to dry out too fast before they could cure properly.

"It's hard to know how extensive the problem is because conditions can change not only region to region but from field to field, and from one end of a field to the other," he says. "But indications are that farmers throughout the province are ending up with frost damaged seeds or a higher green canola seed content."

Although green canola seed doesn't command top price at the elevator, it is a good source of high protein feed for feeder pigs.

Thomas says farmers facing bleak prospects should try and salvage what they can from their crop.

"If the entire crop has been hit by frost and it is completely immature then perhaps the best route is to plow it under," he says. "But if a farmer can use or sell green canola seed for hog feed he should consider that option. He should also remember No. 3 and sample seed may not be that great, but they can still be used for oil processing."

The oilseed specialist says research is being done on many aspects of canola production ranging from when is the earliest time to swath and still get a high quality crop, to methods of curing seed in storage. But he says many questions have yet to be answered.

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Contact: Phil Thomas
782-4641

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Ken Spiller appointed director

A 20-year veteran of Alberta Agriculture has been appointed director of the department's animal industry division.

Ken Spiller, who started with the department in 1966 as a dairy specialist and has served in several positions over the years, assumes the post vacated by Sid Lore earlier this year.

The animal industry division, through its professional and technical staff provides technical advice to Alberta farmers on the production of all classes of livestock. It also administers a variety of programs and oversees regulatory services.

Prior to accepting the director's job, Spiller was head of the regulatory services branch

Spiller's appointment was announced by J. Harold Hanna, assistant deputy minister, production.

A native Albertan, Spiller was born and raised on a mixed farming operation in the Daysland district, southeast of Edmonton.

He holds a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from the University of Alberta. Before joining the department he worked for about 15 years for Burn's Foods in Calgary and Edmonton.

Beginning his service with Alberta Agriculture as a dairy specialist he became supervisor of food technology with the dairy branch in 1968.

In 1971 he was appointed a regional livestock specialist in Edmonton and became supervisor of regional livestock specialists in 1973.

In 1976 he was appointed head of the regulatory services and feeder association branch, the largest branch in the division. One of the prime functions of the branch is to provide brand recording and brand inspection services.

(Cont'd)

"Managing the largest branch in the division has given Ken Spiller a great deal of experience," says Hanna, in making the announcement. "This experience along with his broad knowledge of agriculture has equipped him admirably for his new responsibilities."

Lore, who retired in May, had served as division director for eight years. Prior to the appointment of a full time replacement the five division branch heads shared the responsiblity of acting director.

Hanna expressed his appreciation to Spiller, Ron Weisenburger, Doug Milligan, Bill Herbert and Fred Schuld for serving in the temporary capacities.

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Contact: Ken Spiller
427-5091

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Four methods available to control cattle grubs

The four treatment methods available to cattlemen involved in a warble grub control program also help control other livestock parasites.

Dr. Ali Khan, livestock pest control specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, says the pour-on, spot-on, injectable and high pressure methods of applying systemic insecticides in the fall effectively control warble grubs.

"One of the other advantages of warble control treatments is that these chemicals also suppress cattle lice populations by 67 per cent compared to untreated animals," he says.

Cattlemen regularly treating herds for warbles know the treatments are preventing the animals from becoming heavily infested with lice.

Cattle grubs are the larval stages of warble flies generally known as the common cattle grub and the northern cattle grub. These two species injure cattle in many ways, causing losses to the cattle industry.

Infestations of lice can also reduce the market value of cattle, and reduce weight gains in feeder cattle. Heavy infestations can increase abortion frequency, reduce weaning weights and even reduce a bull's breeding ability.

In Alberta, due to an effective warble control program operated since 1969, the number of warbles found on slaughter cattle has dropped dramatically in the last seven years.

Dr. Khan says although less than 1 per cent of the carcasses checked at packing plants in Alberta show any signs of warbles, it is important to continue efforts to control the insect.

For further information on treating warble and lice problems contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or the local agricultural service board fieldman.

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Contact: Dr. Ali Khan
427-9051

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Assistance program deadline nears

Farmers planning to make use of the Alberta Grasshopper Control Assistance Program are reminded the deadline for submitting a claim is November 30, 1986.

Forms and details on the program are available from Alberta Agriculture district agriculturists and participating municipal offices.

This is the second year for the assistance program which was introduced to help farmers reduce the cost of controlling grasshoppers.

Claimants will be paid a grant covering 50 per cent of the cost of insecticide used only for grasshopper control on land in Alberta. The applicant does not have to be a resident of the province. No grant is paid towards the cost of application.

Eligible insecticides include Sevin XLR, Furadan, Decis, dimethoate, malathion, Lorsban, Hopper Stopper, Counter 15G, diazinon, Monitor, methoxychlor, Guthion and other chemicals registered in Canada for grasshopper control.

The insecticide must have been bought from a licensed dealer or applicator, paid for in full and used only for control of grasshoppers. The program applies to purchases made between December 1, 1985 and November 30, 1986.

In making a claim, all applications must be accompanied by invoices showing the name of the applicant, name of dealer or applicator who sold the product, date of purchase and names(s) and quantity of insecticide purchased. It must also show the chemical has been paid for in full.

Invoices must be originals, carbon copies or non-carbon reproductions. Photocopies of invoices are not acceptable. The invoices can be photocopied at Alberta Agriculture district offices or participating municipal offices. The originals will be returned to the applicant.

(Cont'd)

A claimant may apply only once under the 1986 program and must declare the quantity of insecticide either returned to the dealer or not used during the program period.

For further information contact your local district agriculturist office.

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Contact: Bruce Jeffrey
or
June Barlund
422-5879

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta completes embryo sale to Russia

Alberta bred dairy calves may be romping around Siberian pastures next year, following the sale of 5,000 dairy embryos to the Soviet Union valued at about $6 million.

Doug Hill, Alberta Agriculture's international trade director for Europe, says it is the largest private sector agreement of this kind with the U.S.S.R. and is a major breakthrough for Alberta producers involved in the high-tech world of embryo transfer.

The agreement calls for 1,000 Holstein embryos (or 500 guaranteed pregnancies) to be delivered to the Soviet dairy industry in each of the next five years.

As part of the deal Russian technicians will be trained in Alberta this fall and will return to the Soviet Union to assist in and complete the transfer of the first embryos into host cows.

Hill says if this agreement proves successful it could represent an major new market for the sale of Alberta's high quality livestock.

"In this agreement we are dealing with one republic. There are 15 republics in the Soviet Union," he says. "The success of this venture is being watched by the others and, in fact, by the entire European community."

Hill launched the embryo transfer idea in 1983 which lead to three years of intensive negotiations with the Soviet government.

"The Soviet Union has a large dairy industry and the country is anxious to expand its knowledge and technology," says Hill. "I knew there was a market in the Soviet Union but it was a matter of how to approach and develop it."

Accompanied by two experts from Alberta's private sector, Hill made the first overture in 1984 in a meeting with Gosagroprom, the U.S.S.R. ministry of agriculture and Prodintorg, the country's central buying agency.

(Cont'd)

Alberta completes embryo sale to Russia (cont'd)

"I took people with me who have strong backgrounds in dairy and beef genetics, production managment and a demonstrated commercial experience in the international market place," says Hill. "The two goverment departments are the key to any agricultural sales made to the Soviet Union and have technically capable and qualified negotiators."

Following that 1984 trip, Hill was back in 1985 to visit several state farms and further discuss the embryo transfer sale.

"In January 1986, accompanied by the private sector, I was back again, this time meeting with Soviet officials near the city of Tula, south of Moscow. Here we began serious negotiations toward the completion of the embryo sale."

Between January and July the details of the contract were ironed out and an agreement with Prodintorg was signed. The contract was worked out under the umbrella of the Canada/Soviet Mixed Agriculture Commission protocol agreement.

This embryo transfer agreement was made with the RSFSR, one of the 15 Soviet republics. The first batch of embryos, expected in October this year, will be transplanted into dairy herds near Tula and near the Siberan city of Tyumen.

Approximately 250 Alberta Holstein cows will become the donor animals for the program quota this year. Is is expected each animal can produce four embryos per "flushing", of the quality called for in the agreement. The embryos will be frozen and flown to Russia for transfer into host cows.

Besides the obvious advantage of embryos being easier to ship than calves or yearlings, the donor cows can also produce more than one high quality offspring in a year.

"Canadian Holstein genetics is in demand the world over," says Hill. "We are recognized for quality and all our animals meet the highest veterinarian health requirements.

(Cont'd)

"Canada and Alberta have an animal health regime well respected the world over. International buyers receiving Canadian livestock, know they are getting the very best."

It is expected that the Soviet dairymen will use the Alberta bred stock to cross breed with their own breed of dairy cattle.

"Soviet officials travel the world looking to expand their technology in all areas of agriculture," says Hill. "And with 270 million people to feed, their government is anxious to upgrade their agricultural capability and production. If this project is successful the opporunity is there for Alberta to be part of that growth."

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Contact: Doug Hill
427-4241

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Little change in haying rates

The cost of making hay using custom contractors hasn't changed much from last year according to new figures compiled by Alberta Agriculture.

Although rates vary from area to area, reflecting local conditions, a survey conducted by Maureen Whitlock of the department's statistics branch, shows no big surprises.

The survey results from the Calgary/Lethbridge/Medicine Hat area indicate mowing and conditioning charges are in the $7 to $10 per acre range. Square baling costs range from 27¢ to 34¢ per bale. Stacking and hauling (distance less than one mile) add another 25¢ per bale.

Rates are somewhat lower in the Red Deer/Wainwright/St. Paul region. Mowing and conditioning rates are $7 to $8 per acre. Baling costs range from 25¢ to 35¢ per bale. Stacking and hauling rates are at 25¢ per bale.

In the Edmonton/Athabasca/Peace River areas, $5 to $7 per acre is the rate for mowing and conditioning. Baling charges are 30¢ per bale with stacking and hauling adding 25¢ per bale.

For large round bales (1500 lb) baling charges ranged from $4.50 to $10 per bale with the most commonly quoted rate in all regions being $5 to $7 per bale. Stacking and hauling within a mile of the field added $1 to $2 per bale to the cost.

It should be noted that any additional service such as raking, covering or longer distance hauling will add to the cost. For hauling between five and 50 miles, $15 per ton is a common rate. For longer hauls up to 250 miles, the rate is $2.50 to $2.75 per loaded mile.

For a copy of the survey results for your area or country, contact Garth Nickorick, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0, or phone 556-4247.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Fort Macleod man among nominees

A Fort Macleod area hog and dairy farmer will be among eight finalists in Calgary later this month competing in the national Outstanding Young Farmers competition.

William Van Rootselaar, 31, will be among eight regional finalists making a bid to be one of the three outstanding young farmers presented with the W.R. Motherwell Award.

The other nominees in the competiton represent British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario (two), Quebec and the Maritimes.

Don MacKenzie, an account analyst with Alberta Agriculture Development Corporation in Camrose, says the three outstanding young farmers will be selected at the close of four days of activities surrounding the event.

MacKenzie, who has been involved with the program for five years, says the award recognizes the contribution to agriculture of top young farmers between 18 and 39 years of age.

The eight regional finalists will arrive in Calgary October 22. They will be judged on their progress in agriculture, community contributions, conservation practices, production history and financial record keeping.

The program is organized by Canada Jaycees and hosted by the Calgary Exhibtion and Stampede Association. The event is sponsored by the Bank of Montreal, John Deere Limited and Hoechst Canada Inc.

Anyone wishing to attend an introductory luncheon October 23 should contact the Calgary Chamber of Commerce for reservations.

The three award winners will be announced at ceremonies October 25 at noon at Rotary House on the Stampede Grounds. The award is named after W.R. Motherwell who served as Saskatchewan's minister of agriculture from 1905 to 1915 and federal agriculture minister from 1921 to 1930.

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Contact: Don MacKenzie
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October 13, 1986
For immediate release

Moisture management focus of Calgary conference

Farmers who have faced drought or seen their crops hurt by a lack of moisture will get the most up-to-date advice on dealing with these problems at a mid-November conference in Calgary.

Alberta producers are invited to join their counterparts from Manitoba and Saskatchewan at the fifth annual Western Provincial Conference, November 18 to 20 at the Marlborough Inn.

The conference will bring together some of the top researchers and field experts from government and universities as well as agri-businesses and producers to share their knowledge on managing drought and the overall concern of moisture management in crop production.

Hosted by the Alberta government, the conference won't be able to show people how to make it rain, but it will review the latest technology and management that can be applied to make the best use of available moisture.

"Producers should find some valuable information in every session," says David Neilson, a member of the conference organizing committee with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

"Along with the formal sessions, there are question and answer periods and opportunities during the breaks for producers to rub shoulders with the specialists and get all kinds of practical information about specific situations," he says.

In addition to advice on crop management during drought conditions, the conference will deal with moisture stress on crops. Drought is a general, seasonal problem while moisture stress refers to a more short term problem when a plant is stressed at some stage in its growth because of lack of moisture.

(Cont'd)

Moisture management focus of Calgary conference (cont'd)

The conference is programmed to provide three technical sessions beginning with problem identification: long-term implications of drought; emerging practices to maximize crop production under limited moisture; and concluding with alternate solutions and future directions.

Four farmers from the three prairie provinces will be among the slate of speakers. They include Jack Gorr, of Three Hills and Norm Storch of Hanna, Les Potter of Gull Lake, Saskatchewan and Jim Nielsen of Goodlands, Manitoba.

The producers will speak on their own experiences in dealing with drought.

Also scheduled to speak during the sessions are experts from Alberta Agriculture, the University of Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba, Agriculture Canada Research Station in Lethbridge, University of Saskatchewan, Manitoba Natural Resources, Alberta Forestry and Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska to name a few.

Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga, will be the keynote speaker at the conference banquet November 19.

John Calpas, director of the irrigation and conservation division, Alberta Agriculture, is conference chairman.

For further information on the conference, contact David Neilson at 422-4385 in Edmonton, John Calpas at 381-5145 in Lethbridge or Russ Lewis at 297-5952 in Calgary.

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Contact: David Neilson
422-4385

AGRI-NEWS

October 20, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Consider the options if keeping calves....1
Chemical alternatives being published....3
Try thinking like a consumer....5
No easy answer on water purification....7
Alberta livestock popular in the U.S. 11
Dairy seminar planned for Banff....13
It's not hard to hire good help....14
Strong demand for publication....17
Alternatives for storing high moisture barley....18

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

October 20, 1986
For immediate release

Consider the options if keeping calves

With low cost feed this fall there may be an opportunity for a farmer to make money by keeping his calves, but a producer should weigh all the options before committing himself.

Dwight Karren, a regional livestock specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge, says there are at least three routes a farmer could go in overwintering his own calves, but each one has different results.

The specialist says findings from his own calculations show keeping a calf to slaughter weight may give the best return on investment.

"Because of the abundance of low quality feed at lower prices many calf producers are contemplating feeding their calf crop this year," says Karren. "Before doing so, producers should take a hard look at the economics involved."

For his example Karren compared three options, all starting with a 450 pound calf, worth $105 per hundredweight (cwt).

The first two alternatives considered backgrounding calves at two different rates of gain: one pound and 1.5 pounds of gain per day, for 200 days. The third option budgets feeding the calf for 218 days until it reaches slaughter weight.

"Alternative 1 (a calf gaining at one pound a day) should result in a 650 pound calf ready for summer grazing, while Alternative 2 (a calf gaining at 1.5 pounds a day) should result in a 750 pound calf ready to enter the feedlot to be finished. The third alternative sees the calf being fed until it reaches a slaughter weight of 1,050 pounds."

Karren estimated feeding costs at $92.92 per cwt for Alternative 1, $65.89 per cwt for Alternative 2 and $41.11 per cwt for Alternative 3.

(Cont'd)

Consider the options in keeping calves (cont'd)

"The sale prices necessary to recover feeding costs would be $104.42 per cwt for the 650 gross calf, $92.12 per cwt for the 750 pound feedlot replacement and $70.61 for the 1,050 pound slaughter calf," he says.

Similarly, the price necessary to give a net return of $50 per head would be $112.35, $98.99 and $75.52 per cwt respectively.

"Based on the present and forecasted future market conditions, it would appear that Alternative 3 would be the most likely to return a profit," says Karren. "Similarly, producers that decide on backgrounding calves should aim for 1.5 pounds of gain per day on their calves rather than one pound of gain per day."

	BACKGROUND		FINISHING
	1	2	3
Purchase weight (lb)	450	450	450
Sale weight (lb)	650	750	1050
Purchase Price ($/cwt)	105.	105.	105.
Ration Fed			
Barley (lb)	2.0	4.0	15.0
Hay (lb)	10.0	10.0	10.0
Supplement (lb)	1.0	1.0	1.0
Days to feed	200	200	218
A.D.G. (lb/day)	1.0	1.5	2.75
Feed conversion (lb D.M./lb gain)	11.7	9.0	6.9
Costs* ($/cwt gain)	92.92	65.89	41.11
Break-even sale price ($/cwt)	104.42	92.12	70.61
Price to net $50/head ($/cwt)	112.35	98.99	75.52

*(Feed- barley $1.20/bu including processing and Alberta Feed Grain Market Adjustment; Hay - $60/tonne; Supplement $160/tonne. Interest - 12%; Yardage - 15 cents/head/day; Death Loss - 2% of purchase cost; Vet-Med - $4 processing and 30% treated at $10/head; Trucking - $1/cwt on sale weight; Commission - $2/cwt on sale weight.)

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Contact: Dwight Karren
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October 20, 1986
For immediate release

Chemical alternatives being published

Farmers interested in alternatives to pesticides will find there is more than one way to protect a crop from weeds and insects in a soon-to-be published Alberta Agriculture booklet.

With more farmers asking for information on alternative measures to chemical control, the department's crop protection branch is preparing a publication called "Guide To Crop Protection in Alberta Part II - Non Chemical Control." This will complement the existing 'blue book' on crop protection which lists chemical control measures.

"More Alberta farmers are looking for chemical alternatives citing the high cash cost of pesticides and the depressed prices for farm products," says Keith Price, head of the crop protection branch in Edmonton. "Some farmers also feel chemical control is overused and they are concerned about overexposure to pesticides."

The use of cultural and mechanical pest control has been a traditional part of agricultural practice for centuries. Modern forms of these methods include crop rotation, selection of resistant crop varieties, use of weed and disease free seed and destruction of overwintering pests. Cultivation, delayed seeding, mowing and the use of forage crops all contribute to weed control.

Biological control can involve the introduction of living agents such as bacteria or insects to control weeds or harmful insects. It may also be practised by simply trying to establish or increase the numbers of beneficial native insects, birds or animals.

"Alberta Agriculture wishes to encourage a combination of control measures as a means of achieving sustainable, cost effective pest control.

"The key to good pest management is a thorough knowledge of the pest species. The farmer needs information on the life stages of the pest, how it overwinters, alternate hosts, vulnerable stages and particularly threshold levels at which control becomes profitable."

(Cont'd)

Chemical alternatives being published (cont'd)

Although some pests move into Alberta each spring from the United States, Price says it is not necessary to control these pests to prevent their build up in the long term. He says control decisions are based on a year by year assessment of damage versus cost of control.

An announcement will be made when the publication is available for general distribution.

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Contact: Keith Price
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October 20, 1986
For immediate release

Try thinking like a consumer

Thinking like a consumer is one of the tricks an agricultural food producer must learn if he wants to claim a share of the market. And nutrition is one of the topics upper most in the minds of consumers, says experts in the home economics branch of Alberta Agriculture.

A conference planned for Lethbridge in November should help Alberta's food producers develop the skills to better understand consumer needs and make his or her products more appealing.

"Food shopping can be overwhelming when you consider the vast number of choices that face consumers in the supermarket," says Cathy Edge, a food specialist with Alberta Agriculture. "If you are a producer of agricultural food products you'll be anxious to do all you can to encourage consumers to choose your product.

"At a one-day conference in Lethbridge, speakers will discuss the various ways that you, the producer, can take part in promoting your product."

The November 25 conference theme is: Your Product Is On The Line.

The keynote speaker, Bee Marks, director of food, nutrition and health with Ketchum Public Relations in New York will address the topic "Know Your Audience".

The more the food producer knows about how consumers think, feel and behave, the more accurately they can tailor their message to catch the consumer's attention.

How to respond to nutrition misinformation about your product will be discussed by representatives from the home economics branch, Alberta Agriculture.

The director of the trade policy secretariat of Alberta Agriculture will talk about what free trade will mean to the sale of products.

Guests from the media in Lethbridge will explain how a farm news story is put together and describe how to respond to a bad news story.

(Cont'd)

Try thinking like a consumer (cont'd)

The final item on the agenda is a panel discussion by eight speakers representing the Alberta Vegetable Growers Board, Southern Alberta Poultry Council, Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board, Canadian Seed Growers Association, Pulse Growers Association, Alberta Pork Promoters, Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission and beef producers. They will share their ideas on what does and doesn't work when promoting a product.

The conference will be held at the Lethbridge Lodge and is co-sponsored by the home economics branch, Alberta Agriculture and the County of Lethbridge Agricultural Service Board. The registration fee is $15.

Anyone interested in attending the conference should contact their local Alberta Agriculture district office to get their name on the list to receive a registration form.

For further information contact Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and nutrition specialist or Cathy Edge, food specialist, both in Edmonton at 427-2412 or district home economist Linda Barvir in Lethbridge at 329-5238.

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Contact: Cathy Edge
427-2412

October 20, 1986
For immediate release

No easy answer on water purification

There is no simple answer on how best to purify tap water as each of the two main treatment methods have advantages and drawbacks, says a water specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

"Because each system has its characteristics, it is difficult for me to recommend one process over the other," says water engineer, Archie Archampong, in Edmonton. "I can provide people with some basic information on the two water purification systems which will hopefully help them decide which method best suits their situation."

The water engineer says most requests come from people looking to remove sodium in drinking water, and people concerned about localized industrial contaminants which can affect water quality, as well.

Homeowners find conflicting sales pitches when they try to decide between the two systems known as reverse osmosis and distillation.

The two systems come in a wide price range from $250 to $1,400 depending on the size, model and options available with the unit.

Neither system is perfect for every situation and the buyer has to look at details such as how each performs in removing minerals, risk of bacteria contamination, water taste, system capacity, maintenance and price.

"A reverse osmosis (RO) unit removes contaminants by forcing raw water under pressure against a semi-permeable membrane," says the engineer. "Practically mineral free water passes through the membrane and the remaining brine concentrate is washed down the drain. In distillers the raw water is heated to boiling. The steam or vapor formed is lead into a condenser coil or cooling device where it is condensed to form distilled water."

Both systems can be operated to remove about 95 per cent of dissolved inorganic minerals in raw water, although recently RO units have been criticized for being unable to remove sodium and similar minerals from water.

(Cont'd)

Some investigators claim RO units can only remove 50 to 70 per cent of raw water mineral content.

"R0 units and distillers have both been criticized because they have a potential for permitting harmful organic chemicals to pass into the drinking water," says the water engineer. "For distillers this potential is so great that some manufacturers have found it necessary to integrate carbon filter systems to eliminate this possibility."

Using either system, a homeowner has to be alert for bacteria problems.

Distilled water is bacteria-free but the homeowner must be careful not to contaminate the reservoir when cleaning the unit. Although the pore size in the RO membrane is too small to permit passage of microbes, bacteria can appear in the permeate water through a phenonenum called "grow thru". It occurs when the unit is left idle for some time. The problem can be minimized by following the manufacturer's maintenance recommendations.

"Whether you purchase a distiller or an RO unit, avoid selecting units that produce water far in excess of your daily requirement," says Archampong. "This will reduce the chance of bacteria growth in the purified water. The average family of four will need about two gallons of water daily for cooking and drinking purposes."

Although taste is a personal choice some people claim water from RO systems tastes better than distilled water. The difference has been attributed to the water losing dissolved oxygen during the distillation process. To counteract this, some manufacturers have incorporated aerators in the faucets of distiller units.

Comparing system capacity, RO units, generally available on the market, produce three to five gallons of purified water per day compared to eight to 10 gallons for distillers.

RO units often produce much less water than the specified rating because of low water temperature, low water pressure and highly mineralized raw water.

(Cont'd)

For every gallon of treated water RO units waste up to 20 gallons of raw water.

"Air cooled water distillers do not waste any raw water, but water cooled distillers waste up to 15 gallons of raw water for every one gallon of distilled water produced," says Archampong. "Water-cooled distillers are quieter to run but will require a drain for the effluent concentrate."

Prices are all over the place depending on the model and variety of convenience options available, regardless of whether the homeowner is looking at a distiller or RO unit.

Counter-top models are equipped with reservoirs which provide purified water by gravity. 'Deluxe' models are either installed under the counter (usually RO units) or in the basement. The purified water is delivered under pressure to a separate kitchen faucet or other appliances. Some RO manufacturers offer other options such as travel models and under cabinet models.

"Counter-top RO units cost between $300 and $550 while counter-top distillers range from $250 to $500," says the water specialist. "In the deluxe class, distillers cost $800 to $1,200 compared to $600 to $1,400 for RO units. It costs 12 to 17 cents per gallon to produce water with RO units compared to 15 to 30 cents per gallon with distillers."

Maintenance is another aspect to consider.

RO membranes are easily fouled by suspended matter in raw water and must be operated on prefiltered water or municipally-treated water. These systems must also be occasionally disinfected, not only to prevent membrane fouling, but to eliminate bacterial grow-thru.

A dealer can suggest an appropriate disinfectant. Some chemicals such as chlorine can destroy RO membranes.

(Cont'd)

No easy answer on water purification (cont'd)

"All distillers require cleaning regardless of the 'self-cleaning' capabilities claimed by some manufacturers," says Archampong. "It is important to check if you can visually and physically inspect the boiling chamber to be sure of the ease of cleaning. It is important to check the availability of spare parts and the general safety in operating the unit."

For further information on water purification systems write for Alberta Agriculture publications: Reverse Osmosis (Agdex FS716-D36) and Water Distillers, (Agdex FS716-D62). Both are available from The Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6.

For specific information on water purification, contact one of the following regional engineering staff: Orin Kenzie, Lethbridge, 381-5112; Rich Smith, Airdrie, 948-5101; Ken Williamson, Red Deer, 340-5324; Larry Wasylik, Vermilion, 853-8109; Bob Buchanan, Barrhead, 674-8253 and Bill Cornwell, Fairview, 835-2291.

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Contact: Regional engineer
(Your area)
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October 20, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta livestock popular in the U.S.

Nearly 4,000 head of purebred Alberta beef and dairy cattle were sold around the world last year indicating a growing interest in the quality and class of breeding stock raised in this province.

Through the efforts of the Alberta Canada All Breeds Association 1984 (ACABA) with the support of Alberta Agriculture marketing sector, work continues to keep the name of Alberta breeders foremost in the minds of dairy and beef cattlemen around the world.

The 3,975 head of cattle sold to world markets represented about $7.8 million, says Elton Dunk, trade director with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

Of the total sales, 74 per cent and 22 per cent were to markets in the United States and Mexico, respectively.

Recent purebred livestock sales to the U.S. amount to $500,000 with another $355,000 worth of cattle going to Mexico and $46,750 worth going to eastern Canada.

It is further estimated that livestock genetics (semen and embryos) generated more than $10 million in additional sales in 1985.

"It's figures like these that indicate that Alberta is seen as a world leader in livestock," says Dunk. "Producers here were involved with many of the exotic cattle breeds before U.S. producers. Through breeding refinement many have been tailor made for our conditions. Those same qualities are in demand elsewhere."

The trade director says Alberta producers have developed a solid reputation with international livestock buyers.

"They know if they are buying livestock from Alberta they are getting good quality animals that meet the highest health standards in the world," he says.

ACABA is an umbrella organization which represents the interests of all major cattle breed associations in Alberta as well as the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission and the Alberta Sheep Breeders.

(Cont'd)

Alberta livestock popular in the U.S. (cont'd)

It also has as associate members, Edmonton Northlands, the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede and Prairie West Livestock, a private livestock marketing firm.

The association attends many trade fairs and livestock shows across the U.S. each year promoting Alberta livestock and encouraging producers to buy from Alberta.

Promotional booths, last year, were manned by ACABA representatives at major livestock shows in Madison, Wisconsin; Billings, Montana; Denver, Colorado; Houston, Texas and the National Cattlemen's Association Convention in San Antonio, Texas.

Additional monitoring missions were made to livestock events in Louisville and Kansas City.

"Names of potential buyer contacts are channeled through ACABA to respective breed associations for immediate follow up," says Dunk. "ACABA has also extended invitations to potential buyers, assisted with incoming buyer programs, international lounges at Farmfair and the Calgary Stampede and was instrumental in hosting the World Sheep and Wool Congress in Edmonton in 1986."

The association will continue its efforts at the major U.S. and Mexican livestock events again this year, as well as expand the incoming buyer programs.

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Contact: Elton Dunk
427-2541

October 20, 1986
For immediate release

Dairy seminar planned for Banff

Alberta dairy farmers should set aside time in March to attend a four-day seminar in Banff which will provide useful information on aspects of the dairy industry.

The annual Alberta Dairy Seminar which is slated to go March 10 to 13 at the Banff Springs Hotel will feature several speakers with relevant talks on dairy production.

According to conference organizers, Janette McDonald Adam and Val Smythe, a similar seminar held earlier this year was well received.

"Quality speakers, good content, useful information...The speakers were available to talk to between and after sessions...The choice of speakers was excellent...The conference covered nutritional and management factors directly and applicable to profitable production... Answered what I needed to know for my operation."

These were just some of the comments from producers who attended the 1986 conference, says McDonald Adam, Leduc district agriculturist.

"It is hoped the 1987 seminar will be even better," she says.

The first day of the seminar will focus on development of a replacement heifer program. Speakers will discuss how to keep the high producing cow in the herd longer; the benefits of planning the number of replacements heifers required each year; and raising those heifers to breeding age.

The second day of the seminar will highlight animal health. A panel made up of a veterinarian, a nutritionist and dairy specialist will tackle two case studies of health problems associated with nutrition and reproduction.

"Both of these main themes have a direct effect on farm income and profitability," says McDonald Adam.

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Contact: Janette McDonald Adam
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Val Smythe
432-2406

October 20, 1986
For immediate release

It's not hard to hire good help

Paying family members for their farm work is one way a farmer can save money on taxes, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

While putting sons, daughters or wife on the payroll may break a tradition, it can make sense from a business point of view, says Alex Ostapiuk a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds.

"Reality is that many farmers do give up tax dollars by not taking advantage of the income tax provisions that would allow them to reduce the amount of income tax they pay and increase the take home pay of the family," he says. "This money could be quite easily saved by paying a wage or salary to family members and by doing a minimum amount of extra bookwork."

Canada's income tax system has progressive rates that cause the rate of tax applicable to an individual's last dollar of taxable income to increase as the individual's taxable income increases.

As a result, it is beneficial to divide the income earned in a business among all the individuals involved and working within the business.

The procedure for paying family members is dealt with step-by-step, using 1986 tax information, in a newly revised Alberta Agriculture publication entitled "Tax and the Farm Family".

"The monetary and other advantages and disadvantages of paying a wage to family dependants are looked at first," says Ostapiuk. "If a decision to pay is being considered then a method of paying dependants with the required payroll deductions is looked at along with the effects on the standard deductions of employees and the farm employer. Explanations of other exemptions and deductions applicable to family tax management (with their 1986 figures) are included."

(Cont'd)

It's not hard to hire good help (cont'd)

Quoting from the guide, the economist lists the advantages of paying wages to family members.

1. children's spending money, when provided as a wage payment - can be tax deductible to the parents
2. splitting farm earnings among family members - the total income taxes payable by the entire family may be less
3. the employment expense deduction and the individual personal exemptions available can be more fully utilized and therefore keeping more after-tax income available in the family
4. spouse's income could be maintained at a sufficiently high enough level to allow for CPP contribution and therefore, qualify them for retirement and disability benefits
5. students attending appropriate educational institutions can have employment earnings against which their tuition and moving expenses can be written off
6. interest and involvement in the farming operation increases due to monetary recognition of children's efforts
7. through paying wages to family members, non-essential tax saving expenditures, such as purchase of equipment for incremental depreciation or Investment Tax Credit, can be avoided.

"On the other end of the scale the disadvantages for employing family labor who are dependants are also just as varied," he says.

There is added paperwork and recordkeeping plus added payroll expenses for the employer such as Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Unemployment Insurance Commission (UIC) payments."

Funds paid out in salaries and bonuses are no longer in the hands and under the control of the farm manager. Also disagreements about management may arise when family members are more involved in the business.

(Cont'd)

It's not hard to hire good help (cont'd)

Copies of Tax and the Farm Family, (Agdex 837-6), can be obtained from Alberta Agriculture district offices; the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0, or by writing to the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
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October 20, 1986
For immediate release

Strong demand for information

Demand for the most recent edition of a farm information manual has been so strong the publication is temporarily out of stock.

But orders for the next printing of the Agricultural Workshop for Lenders' Manual are being taken, says Doug Barlund, a farm management economist with Alberta Agriculture in Olds.

Described as a lenders' manual because it was developed for a workshop for bankers and other credit managers, the manual is also a useful reference for anyone looking for practical information on all kinds of agricultural enterprise matters.

Persons wanting a copy of the 600-page information manual, should place orders for the 1987 edition with the farm business management branch in Olds.

"We are now planning the next five day Agricultural Workshop for Lenders, which will be held May 31 to June 5, 1987, on campus at Olds College," says Barlund. "Copies of the manual should be available by mid-May, 1987.

"Although it was first produced as a reference manual for the Lenders' Workshop, it has proven useful to agricultural consultants, appraisers, accountants, landmen and farm owner/managers as a quick source of production and economic data that is needed to make business decisions in agriculture."

The lenders manual replaces the two-volume Farm Management Data Manual that will no longer be available from Alberta Agriculture.

For further information about the manual and advice on how to order a copy contact Alberta Agriculture, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0.

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Contact: Douglas E. Barlund
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October 20, 1986
For immediate release

Alternatives for storing high moisture barley

Farmers taking advantage of any break in the weather, have three alternatives to consider when deciding how to store high moisture barley.

While a producer would normally wait a few days to allow the crop to dry in the swath, farmers who have been idled this fall by too much rain, can't afford any more delays.

In a bid to get the crop off as soon as the ground can carry the combine, many producers are forced to harvest barley before the grain has dried to a safe moisture level for storage. Grain that is too wet, (above 14.8 per cent moisture) is likely to heat and spoil in the bin.

Murray McLelland, supervisor of cereal crops for Alberta Agriculture, says mechanically drying high moisture barley gives the farmer the most options in dealing with his crop.

Properly dried barley can be stored, fed to livestock, sold to the elevator or used for seed.

The other alternatives in dealing with high moisture barley are to put it up as silage, or add an acid preservative which essentially pickles the crop. Either one of these methods will preserve the barley, but in both cases the grain can only be used as livestock feed.

"Ensiling, acid preservation and mechanical drying are the three alternatives to storing high moisture barley", says McLelland, a specialist with the field crops branch in Lacombe. "Barley harvested above 14.8 per cent moisture is considered unsafe for storage.

"As the grain moisture and/or temperature content increases the safe grain storage time decreases. (See Fig. 1)

"For example, if the grain is at 20 per cent moisture and 16°C (60°F), it is only safe to store for 20 to 30 days. Micro-organisms will cause spoilage and heating quickly after this time period, rendering the grain useless."

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Alternatives for storing high moisture barley (cont'd)

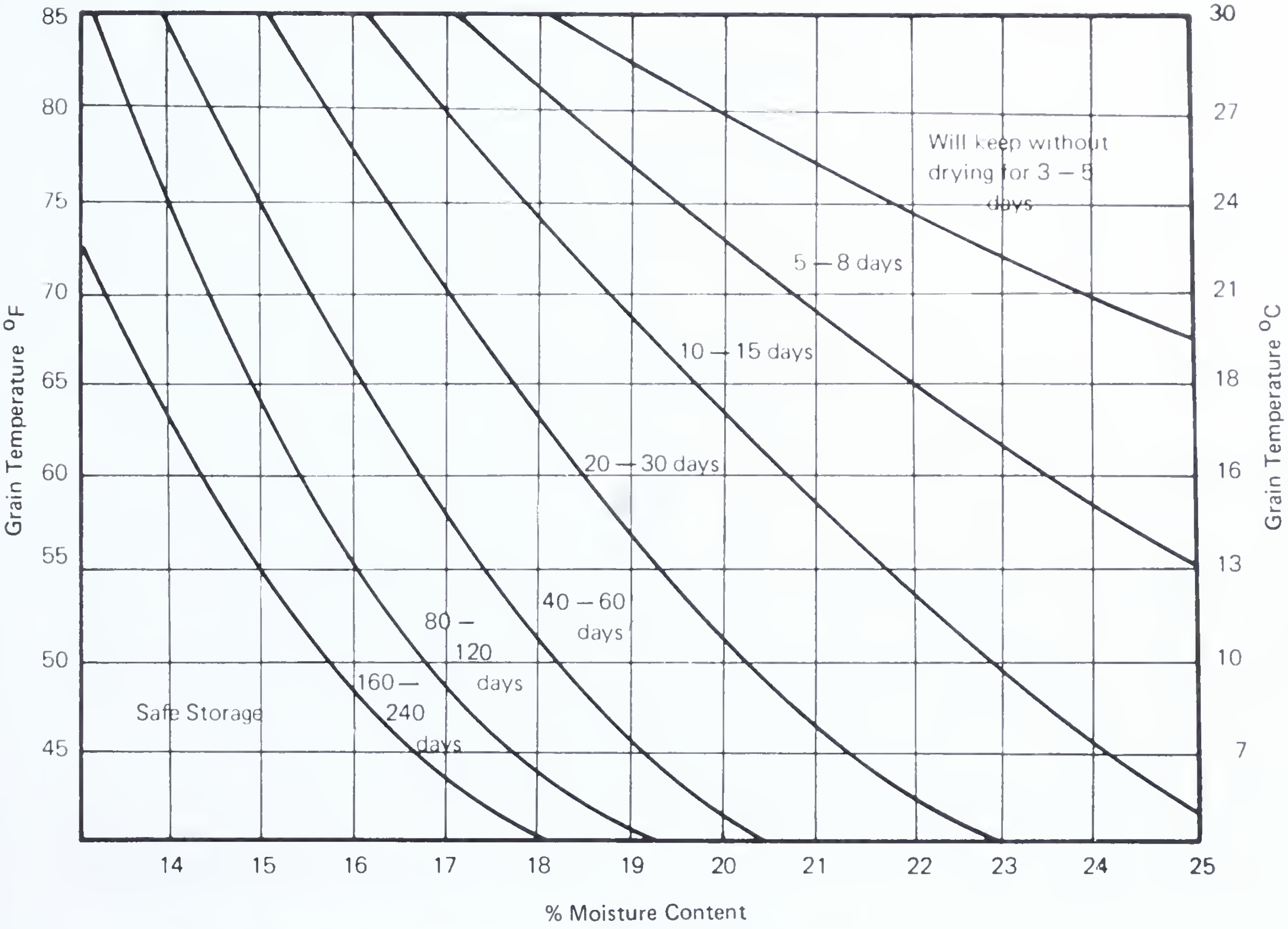

FIGURE 1. Storage time for grain at various temperatures and moisture contents.

Ensiling

Ensiling the grain, sometimes known as high moisture grain preservation, means harvesting the barley at 25 to 35 per cent moisture (30 per cent seems ideal), storing in an oxygen-excluding structure (pit silo, upright silo, plastic tubes) in a manner that promotes the growth of anaerobic bacteria.

(Cont'd)

The bacteria ferments the barley carbohydrates to produce acid (mainly lactic acid). Moisture content and packing of barley when stored are the most important factors to success, says McLelland. Excess oxygen must be excluded through packing. Packing is improved when the grain is rolled or hammered before it is placed in the silo. The barley must remain in an oxygen free environment or spoilage will occur.

"When feeding high moisture barley from a pit silo in freezing temperatures, few spoilage problems occur, but when warm weather arrives, spoilage of the exposed surface begins," says McLelland. "Matching the exposed surface area to daily feed requirements by removing three inches or more of grain daily will reduce spoilage.

"Storing barley as high-moisture grain limits marketing opportunities to those feed lots in the immediate surrounding area, because of the high cost in transporting so much water contained in the grain. Further, high moisture barley does not flow or auger well as it will bridge easily."

Acid preservation

Acid preservation is accomplished by adding sufficient organic acid (propionic acid mainly, but can be mixed with acetic acid) to the grain, depending on its moisture content.

Moisture	Organic acid % by weight	lb/ton
18	0.8	16.0
20	0.9	18.0
22	1.0	20.0
24	1.15	23.0
26	1.25	25.0

"The current price of propionic acid from one supplier, (a quote by Van Waters & Rodgers, Calgary [236-1713], Edmonton [452-6655]) would result in a cost of $0.39 per bushel (chemical costs only) to treat 20 per cent moisture barley for storage," says the specialist.

Molding of stored acid treated grain is encouraged if it is exposed to moisture, dirt or exposed wood surfaces. Floors and all wood surfaces, concrete floors and walls, which contact the grain should be painted or covered with plastic. Steel or galvanized bins must also be coated.

(Cont'd)

"Acid treated grain can only be sold to feeders as elevators will not accept either high moisture grain or acid treated grain," says McLelland. "Germination of treated grain is drastically reduced so it isn't suitable as a seed source."

Grain drying

Grain drying is simply removing moisture from grain by air movement (usually hot) until the moisture content of the grain is low enough for safe storage. Safe storage moisture contents are as follows:

	Moisture %		Moisture %
Wheat	14.5	*Canola	10.0
Barley	14.8	Corn	15.5
Oats	14.0	Peas	16.0
Rye	14.0	Sunflowers	9.5
Flax	10.5	Mustard	11.0
Buckwheat	16.0	Canary Seed	12.0

* For marketing, 10 per cent is considered dry; however, 8 to 9 per cent moisture at temperatures below 20°C are necessary for long-term canola storage.

If long-term storage, greater than eight months, is anticipated, lower moisture content may be required.

"Natural air drying is the passing of large volumes of unheated outside air through the grain to remove from two to four per cent moisture," says McLelland. "The relative humidity of the air must be below the equilibrium moisture content of the grain or it will gain moisture rather than lose moisture."

Equilibrium grain moisture content in storage (%)	Equilibrium relative humidity of air in stored grain (%)
12	51
13	58
14	65
15	72
16	78
17	83
18	87

(Cont'd)

Alternatives for storing high moisture barley (cont'd)

"When grain drying is most needed, during inclement fall weather, the outside relative humidity is usually quite high," he says. "Therefore, drying is slow, and on some days, impossible, with this system. This is why natural air drying has been described as a race to get the grain dried before it spoils.

"Hot air drying is by far the most popular method of changing moist barley into safe storage condition. When performed in a proper manner, there is no loss in quality of the grain, and it can be marketed into all normal channels."

To dry grain as quickly as possible, it is best to use the highest possible temperatures. There is a limit, however, since grain can be damaged if overheated.

The maximum allowable hot air plenum temperatures, when removing not more than six per cent moisture at one time and drying to not more than one per cent below, the previously mentioned safe storage levels are:

	Seed or Malt (°C)	Commercial Use (°C)	Feed (°C)
Wheat	60	65	80
Oats	45	60	80
Barley	45	55	80
Rye	45	60	80
Corn	45	55	80
Flax	45	80	80
Canola	45	80	--
Peas	45	70	80
Mustard	45	45	--
Sunflower	45	50	--
Buckwheat	45	45	--

The custom hot air grain drying charge is in the 25 to 30¢ per bushel range.

"Aeration is not considered a grain drying method despite the fact that one or two per cent moisture can be removed under ideal conditions," says McLelland. "The purpose of aeration is to change the temperature within a grain mass in order to prolong the storage life. Small quantities of air are used to cool the grain and eliminate temperature and moisture content variations throughout the bin."

(Cont'd)

Alternatives for storing high moisture barley (cont'd)

As shown in Figure 1, if grain temperatures are lowered sufficiently, it may be stored safely, even at relatively high moisture content.

For more information on any of the storage systems contact an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist or regional engineer.

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AL.1.691

AGRI-NEWS

October 27, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Students contribute to updated farm safety guide......................1
Support given National 4-H Week..5
Taking Alberta's seed to the cleaners................................7
Honey production expected to increase..............................11
Alberta beef breaks into Japanese market..........................13
Not all repayment plans are created equal.........................16
Crop protection course still available................................21
Computer training hits the road..22
Minimize stress in feeding calves.....................................24

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Students contribute to updated farm safety guide

Twenty-one young artists and writers from across Alberta will be honored in December for their contributions to the 1986 edition of an educational farm safety guide used by 50,000 rural Alberta students.

The 21 Grade 1 to 6 students from 14 schools will be recognized for their contributions to the updated "A Child's Guide to Farm Safety" which is expected to be available for distribution in late November.

The guide, an activity booklet designed around the theme of farm safety, has been incorporated into studies in many Alberta classrooms. Using posters and essays created by students it presents students with problems and quizzes on a variety of farm safety matters.

A joint venture of Alberta Agriculture and Esso Petroleum Canada, this is the 11th year the guide has been produced and the results of the program are impressive, says Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program.

"Every aspect of this program has proven successful, but the bottom line is to teach farm safety," he says. "Because the program is centered around children, our farm accident and fatality rate in this age group has dropped dramatically in recent years.

"Where at one time we were averaging 10 farm accident fatalities a year, through increased education and awareness, we have reduced that to an average of four fatalities a year."

Along with the activity booklet, a computer program involving farm safety, has also been redesigned for use in the classroom.

Recognizing a need to be contemporary, the farm safety educational materials being produced this year have been changed from 1985.

(Cont'd)

The workbook has a wider variety of activities and exercises. All quizzes and other work projects are based on the actual art work and essays that appear in the guide. And the projects have been developed on a lock-and-key method, meaning one section must be completed and "locked" before beginning the next.

The computer software, this year, is simpler to use but offers a more challenging game format. A child's name replaces a robot figure for moving through the maze. Although it uses the same safety theme, the computer program activities are different from those found in the child guide booklet. There are different levels of skill for Grades 1 to 3 and Grades 4 to 6. The teacher's guide has also been improved.

Once off the press in late November the materials will be available on a first-come first-served basis from Alberta Agriculture. They are used extensively and are in high demand.

"The demand always exceeds the supply," says Kyeremanteng. "Our first priority is to first meet the needs of rural schools who request the material and then we try and fill the requests from urban school jurisdictions.

"The program is not only popular here, but it is recognized as one of the leading programs in North America. Earlier this year I gave a paper on the program in the U.S. and I'm sure I could spend all my time just giving talks on the program - there is that much interest in what we are doing."

The manager says the trick to success is keeping the program current and interesting.

"The secret in sustaining the farm safety program is being very imaginative and creative and making it interesting," says Kyeremanteng. "The students find these programs entertaining and fun and to top it off they are learning something important. It's kids teaching kids and peer group communication is very powerful. Parents get involved too and it becomes a family affair."

(Cont'd)

Students contribute to updated farm safety guide (cont'd)

The farm safety material has been developed so it can be incorporated in core subjects such as health, language arts, science and social studies. Each school division must make a written request for the material. Alberta Agriculture will also provide in-service training to show teachers how the guide works.

The farm safety manager echoed the words of Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga who thanked Esso Petroleum for their substantial financial support for the program.

"This is the second year that Esso Petroleum Canada has joined my department to co-produce this guide," says the minister. "I am very pleased that they care enough about (the safety of our children) to help fund this project."

The 21 students, who were selected winners, will be recognized individually by the department and Esso Petroleum. The overall winning school entry was submitted by Andrew School of Andrew, a community northeast of Edmonton.

Following is a list of the individual winners with the subject of their poster or essay in brackets:

Falun School - Dale Brown (machinery); Nicole Jansen (animals). Caledonia Park (Leduc) - Karle Young (machinery). Crossfield - Barb Craig (Machinery). Vermilion - Cory Stafford (machinery); Lee MacLean (animals); Noel Heard (chemicals) Sheila Person (fire); Ryan Miller (fire). Viscount Torrington - Jennifer Bigelow (animals). Cremona - Lisa Ewing (animals). Forestburg - Amaia Halberg (water); Andra Forster (harvest). Grassland - Philanna Karpetz (water). Mannville - Lindsay Wagner (chemicals). Spruce View - Greg Jobs (fire); Kari Larsen (fire). OK Colony School (Raymond) - Joe J. Hofer (fire). JS McCormick (Lacombe) - Jamie Dean Rose (harvest). Glendon School - Dara Lee Lelond (window). Central Elementary (Brooks) - Rania Burns (window).

(Cont'd)

Students contribute to updated farm safety guide (cont'd)

"Although these children have been selected to receive awards, we must not forget the efforts of all rural school children, their teachers and families for making the child's guide the successful program it has become over the last 11 years," says Kyeremanteng.

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October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Support given National 4-H Week

Eight 4-H members and five 4-H leaders from Alberta will be participating in two national conferences in Toronto in November, as part of activities surrounding National 4-H Week.

The provincial representatives will be joining their counterparts from across the country at the two separate conferences held in conjunction with the November 10 to 16 week proclaimed by federal Agriculture Minister John Wise.

The senior 4-H members will be attending the National 4-H Conference November 12 to 17 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. The theme will be "Forging our Future Through 4-H". Delegates from all 10 provinces will be joined by five visitors from the United Kingdom involved in an exchange program.

The 4-H members were designated to represent Alberta earlier this year at the "Selections" conference. Selections is an annual event in which leading 4-H members from Alberta are selected to participate in a variety of conferences, workshops and programs both nationally and internationally.

Alberta delegates include Charlene Schultz of Bashaw, Rob Smith of Olds, Alain Joly of St. Paul, Monica Groom of Ponoka, Leanne Griffith of Balzac, Patrick Church of Drumheller, Karen Sande of Beaverlodge and William Pawlak of Mundare.

At the same time, five Alberta 4-H leaders will be attending the National 4-H Volunteer Leaders' Conference. The leaders were picked through an awards program which recognizes their contribution and dedication to 4-H clubs and activities.

The leaders' conference will focus on Creative Leadership - Today's Challenge.

Alberta delegates include Lee Stringer of Sunnynook, Raleigh Kett of Wainwright, Eleanor Dickson of Grimshaw, Eugene Jesse of Rimbey and Carole Miller of Westlock.

(Cont'd)

The delegates to both conferences will be honored at a send-off banquet November 11, in Edmonton, sponored by the Alberta Wheat Pool.

Although there is nothing formal planned on a provincial basis to mark the national week, it is anticipated many individual 4-H clubs will be organizing programs to show their support.

The national week salutes the "exceptional work" of the 4-H organization in Canada. For the first time more than a dozen major grocery chains from coast to coast will be joining in the recognition by promoting Canadian 4-H in grocery ads during the week.

"Given the link between Canada's agricultural community and the food business, it seems fitting that this sector should join others in recognizing the contribution 4-H has made to Canadian youth," says Betsy Clarke, executive director of the Canadian 4-H council in Ottawa.

"National 4-H week highlights the unique opportunity 4-H represents today for young people growing up in our rural communities to develop their potential. These young people will some day thread their way through the entire fabric of our society in rural, urban and suburban settings. Thanks to 4-H, to these young Canadians, learning and doing will have become second nature."

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October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Taking Alberta's seed to the cleaners

In some ways they may be the Cinderellas of Alberta's grain and oilseed industry.

Overshadowed by prairie elevators, they work behind the scenes. They are never eulogized by poets and who ever heard of an artist painting a crimson sunset as the backdrop for the prairie monument - the seed cleaning plant?

Celebrated or not, for nearly 40 years seed cleaning plants have been the foundation for the multi-billion dollar grain and oilseed industry in Alberta.

With 77 plants operating from Milk River in southern Alberta, to High Level in the Peace River region, the Alberta seed cleaning system has become the envy of the crop industry in North America.

The seed cleaning system has contributed greatly to seed quality and increased crop production on Alberta's farms.

Represented by the Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd. the facilities process 29 million bushels of grain a year. If built today the plants would represent a capital investment of nearly $90 million.

The first seed cleaning plant was built in Camrose in 1948, says Murray McLelland, supervisor of cereal crops with Alberta Agriculture in Lacombe.

The system went through a major building program during the 1950s with most plants, now operating in Alberta, built during that decade.

Because of growing demand on capacity and aging, many of the earliest wood frame plants are now being replaced with metal structures. With an average cost of $1 million per plant, the replacement program is booked until 1990.

Simply put, the seed cleaning plant system was established, with the help of the provincial government, to clean weed seeds out of grain being saved or sold for seed.

(Cont'd)

"It originated with a request from farmers who didn't want to put weed infested seed back into the ground," says McLelland. "The work these plants do falls into the category of crop protection. Specifically the regulations which guide the operation of the system come under The Weed Control Act."

Without the system farmers would no doubt face a more expensive means of getting seed cleaned and there would be risk of a greater weed problem in Alberta, leading to reduced yield from grain and oilseed crops.

The individual plants are owned and operated by farmer co-operatives, which elect a nine-member board of directors.

Originally the facilities were built with an even one-third split in costs between the provincial government, the municipal government, and the farmer members.

The cost-sharing split has changed with the provincial government and farmers each picking up 40 per cent and the municipality 20 per cent.

The plants are intended to operate as a business, although they aren't profit oriented per se. They are to make enough money to cover operating expenses and the board of directors should also ensure enough is set aside to cover maintenance, upgrading and replacement costs.

"The plants are generally in a non-profit situation," says McLelland. "They are giving Alberta farmers one of the lowest seed cleaning rates in North America.

"Some of the boards like to give their members the lowest rate possible, but this can lead to problems when it comes time for a major upgrading or replacement and no money has been set aside.

"A charge of a few cents more per bushel can easily establish a depreciation fund. The boards have to be involved in forward planning."

Although there are 77 plants in Alberta, the provincial seed cleaning plant association, headed by president Martin Daniels of Wainwright, actually has 80 member-plants, including two in British Columbia and one in Manitoba.

(Cont'd)

Taking Alberta's seed to the cleaners (cont'd)

STONY PLAIN SEED CLEANING

Stony Plain seed cleaning plant is the newest replacement plant in Alberta. Built for $1.3 million, it was opened in August.

(Cont'd)

Taking Alberta's seed to the cleaners (cont'd)

Each plant has an average 300 farmer shareholders and the average plant processes 400,000 bushels of seed a year. McLelland says a new plant needs to process a minimum of 300,000 bushels a year to be viable.

Again dealing with averages, it costs a farmer about 25 cents to have a bushel of wheat cleaned although the price ranges from 17 to 35 cents, depending on the type of seed and time of year.

Every plant is operated by a fulltime manager and depending on volumes handled, many plants have one or more assistants.

While cleaning seed is the main function, they also provide a seed separation service. If a crop has a mixture of canola and barley the plant can separate the two varieties for the farmer. Also the plants can be used for seed sizing. A farmer can have barley processed to extract the larger kernels suitable for malt barley.

"I think we tend to underestimate the agronomic importance of this system which provides clean seed for planting our crops," says McLelland. "It may sound like a small point, but the value to producers and to the economy, in general, is enormous.

"It is also important that farmer shareholders play an active role in the management of their plants to make sure they are operating efficiently and providing the service intended. In a day when farmers seem to feel less and less control over factors that influence their livelihood, the seed cleaning plant co-operative is local enough that an individual farmer can have an influence on decisions."

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October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Honey production expected to increase

Honey production in Alberta is expected to increase significantly this year over 1985 according to preliminary figures from Alberta Agriculture.

A survey of Alberta beekeepers by the department's statistics branch reveals that honey production in 1986 will be up by more than 20 per cent over the poor crop of 1985, says statistician Michael Adam.

This survey, conducted each summer in co-operation with Statistics Canada, is aimed at obtaining a preliminary indication of honey production in the province.

"The survey enjoys widespread support within the beekeeping industry," says Adam. "Response rate is consistently high, exceeding 30 per cent at each survey. With such response, it has been possible not only to accurately forecast honey production, but also to estimate the number of producing colonies and the extent of overwintering in the province."

This year's results indicate that the honey crop will be slightly below 23 million pounds. This production, if achieved, would represent an increase of more that 23 per cent over the 1985 crop but would still be considerably below the all-time record production of approximately 28 million pounds obtained in 1984.

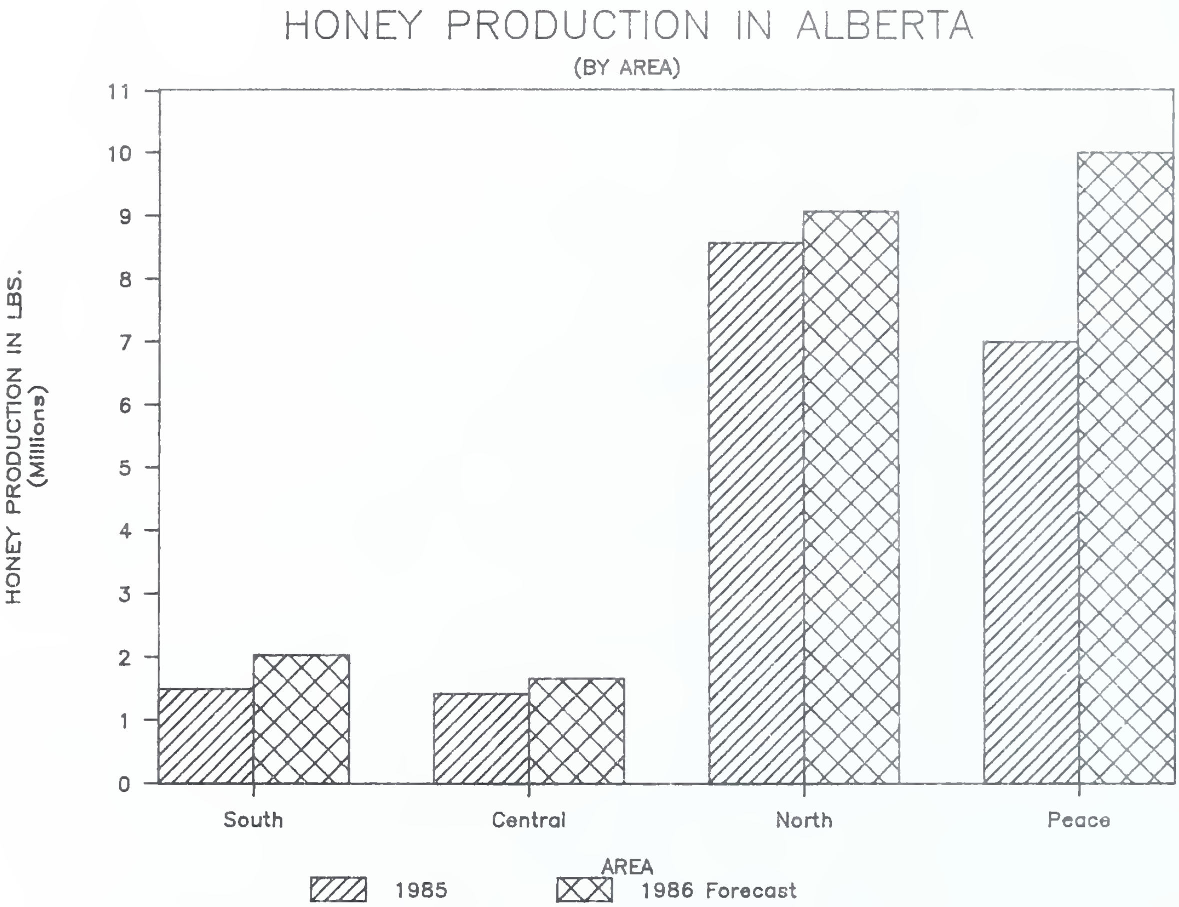
Sub-provincial forecasts show that increases will occur in all areas, but most markedly in the Peace River Region where 1985 production was severely curtailed by extreme drought conditions during the summer months.

Final production estimates will be obtained from a second survey to be conducted shortly.

Beekeepers will receive the questionnaires by the end of October and are urged to fill them out and return them, in the self-addressed envelopes that will be provided, at their earliest convenience.

(Cont'd)

Honey production expected to increase (cont'd)



Graph compares 1985 and 1986 honey production

Anyone interested in detailed results of the summer survey can obtain a survey copy by contacting Statistics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Third Floor, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Michael Adam
427-4011

October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta beef breaks into Japanese market

More Alberta beef is being sold in Japanese supermarkets these days and the prospects are good that meat from the wild rose country will win even a bigger share of the market in the land of the lotus blossom.

It has taken the efforts of 15 years of knowing and understanding the Japanese people and their consumer demands to bring Alberta beef sales to Japan, in 1985, to 110 metric tonnes valued at $1.2 million.

"But it's a gradual process," says Alberta Agriculture's senior international trade director for the Pacific and Asia.

"The Japanese are very traditional people and it takes time to establish your image in that country as a supplier of any product," says Jackson Gardner.

The trade director says the long term goal is to capture 10 per cent of Japan's import beef market which could be worth $60 million a year to Alberta.

The greatest breakthrough in beef sales to Japan has come in the last two to three years as marketing experts isolated a gap in the specific cuts of beef being supplied to Japan, by Canada's biggest competitor, the United States.

"We have been shipping beef to Japan for 15 years," says Gardner. "And we were intially focusing on the high value loin cuts, such as steak and roasts. We felt at that time it was the right approach and our best product.

"But we found we couldn't compete with the United States. They had established themselves and they could sell these cuts cheaper than we could. We were trying to sell something we didn't have a competitive edge with.

"We sat down with our beef industry and considered the options. We had to either continue as we were, or cancel our plan, or modify."

(Cont'd)

Gardner says in a review of the Japanese market it was decided rather than try and compete with the more expensive loin cuts from the U.S., Alberta should push the less expensive front quarter cuts.

"We were the net exporter of these cuts to the U.S." says Gardner. "So if we could sell them to our major competitor we should be able to sell them to Japan."

Beef front quarters produce plates and chucks which can be processed for Japanese consumers into cuts suitable for popular dishes such as the Korean barbecue, the beef bowl, which is noodles, vegetables and beef, and less expensive cuts such as chuck roasts.

"Three years ago we began our promotions with an emphasis at the retail level and hotel trade," says Gardner. "There were several missions of Japanese buyers coming to Alberta and an Alberta delegation made several trips there."

In April a group from Alberta staged another promotion in Japan and in October a group of Japanese suppliers and packing house operators are expected here.

"The bottom line is our efforts have been successful," says Gardner. The word is getting around. The Japanese like the products we are able to supply. There has even been some companies who have come back to us and asked if we had anything else to sell."

The trade director says by gaining Japanese confidence there has also been increased interest in the loin cuts.

Again within the hotel trade, marketing experts have promoted the quality of Alberta loin steaks and roasts.

"The Japanese, like many other consumers, are very health conscious. American beef has traditionally been much fatter than ours. That's the way most Americans like it," says Gardner.

"But we can interest the Japanese in our more expensive cuts by showing them it is leaner and healthier without sacrificing taste and prove it is a better value. We promote both the loin and front quarter cuts as 'Healthy Canadian Beef'

(Cont'd)

"We now have one regular buyer in the city of Sapporo, which is in Hokkaido province (Alberta's sister province) and they can't keep enough Alberta beef in the hotel. This hotel is part of a chain so hopefully the other hotels will be interested in our meat."

The trade director says although Alberta loin cuts may cost the Japanese buyer 3 to 4 per cent more than the comparable U.S. cut, often the buyer gets 15 per cent more meat because of the lower fat content.

Gardner says compared to historic levels, Alberta beef volumes to Japan have increased 120 per cent. The value by pounds or kilograms has increased by 160 per cent.

"We have set up a five-year timetable and our target is to get 10 per cent of the Japanese import beef market," he says. "And I beleive our target is attainable. We have the right product. If demands change then we may have make some modification.

"With red meat consumption in Canada declining, we have to be looking for new markets. If we don't develop markets in Japan and the U.S. west coast, it could be a grim future for Alberta's livestock industry."

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October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Not all repayment plans are created equal

Because not all farm loans are created equal, a farmer should have a close look at the repayment plan before signing along the dotted line, says an economist with Alberta Agriculture.

"When you're negotiating a loan, don't make a decision on which offer to accept until you see the payment schedules," says Craig Edwards. "What you see is what you get."

An inexperienced borrower might expect that two types of loans for the same amount, for the same length of time, at the same rate of interest per compounding period, would have the same payment schedule.

"This isn't necessarily so," says Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "It all depends on the way payments are set up."

To illustrate Edwards describes two payment schedules for loans of $100,000 for 10 years, at 12 per cent interest, compounded annually with annual loan payments being made at the end of each year for 10 years. Both types of loans are typically used by Alberta farmers.

One is described as an amortized loan while the other is considered a straight loan.

"Remember, with these two loans the interest is compounded annually. Most mortgage loans on houses and some mortgage loans on farms are compounded semi-annually so the payments will be different for them."

Under the amortized loan the payment amount is unchanged throughout the life of the loan. The payment schedule starts out heavy on the interest side with a smaller amount going toward the principal. As the loan is paid off the principal/interest ratio reverses.

Although the payments have remained equal, under this system the farmer ends up paying more interest.

Under the straight loan the annual payment starts out high and gradually decreases over the term of the loan.

Cont'd)

The share of the payment that goes towards principal remains the same although the interest portion decreases over the term of the loan.

Although the straight loan payments may be harder to handle at the outset, they get progressively easier to afford. And when the loan is completed the farmer has paid less interest.

"The two loans are very much alike," says Edwards. "The amount of loan, $100,000, is the same, the time of 10 years is the same, and the interest rate of 12 per cent is the same. But the payments are quite different except first year interest payments of $12,000 are the same for both loans."

The following figures compare the highlights of the two payment plans. (For more details see Tables 1 and 2 attached.)

	(Amortized)	(Straight)
1. Highest total annual payment	$17,698.42	$22,000.00
2. Lowest total annual payment	17,698.42	11,200.00
3. Highest interest paid annually	12,000.00	12,000.00
4. Lowest interest paid annually	1,896.26	1,200.00
5. Highest principal paid annually	15,802.16	10,000.00
6. Lowest principal paid annually	5,698.42	10,000.00
7. Total payments of princ. & int.	176,984.20	166,000.00
8. Total payments of interest	76,984.20	66,000.00
9. Total tax shield for 10 yrs. at 30% tax rate	23,095.28	19,800.00

"And what can you do with this information?" asks Edwards. "You can consider your repayment options. If you can make the bigger total payments under the straight loan for the first four years, you can save $10,894.20 of total interest over the 10 year term, before tax.

"If you pay income tax at a 30 per cent marginal tax rate, and the interest is deductible as an income tax expense, your cash outflow will be decreased by the amount of the tax shield. For the amortized loan, your cash flow of $76,984.20 for total interest over the 10 years will be reduced by $23,095.28 of tax shield to a total cash outflow for interest of $53,888.92.

"For the straight loan, the total cashflow for total interest paid drops to $46,200 which is still $7,688.92 less than the amortized loan.

(Cont'd)

Not all repayment plans are created equal (cont'd)

"At a 50 per cent marginal tax rate, the difference would be less but still the cash outflow would be greater for the amortized loan than the straight loan for the 10-year period.

"For the first five years you'll pay $98,000 for the straight loan compared with $88,492.10 for the amortized loan, but you will have paid $13,798 more on the principal also."

Edwards says when a farmer is negotiating a loan, he should get a payment schedule of the different types of loans available. It's easier to compare loans when he has all the figures to look at.

Many banks and other lenders will provide a free computer-calculated schedule or they may charge a fee. If they won't provide a schedule the economist suggests finding someone with a computer who can make a copy.

"Your district agriculturist or regional farm economist with Alberta Agriculture may also be able to help if they have a computer available with a loan program," he says.

A farmer with a computer and printer, can get the software (program) from the farm business management branch at Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0. He should check with the Olds office to make sure the program and computer are compatible.

"You can even calculate payment schedules yourself with a financial calculator or financial tables and a pencil," says Edwards. "No matter how you produce a payment schedule for loans with annual payments, you must know these four factors before you start calculating: The amount of the loan; the term (length of time in years); the interest rate per year and the number of compounding periods per year."

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Not all loans are created equal (cont'd)

TABLE I
AMORTIZED EQUAL ANNUAL PAYMENTS
LOAN OF $100,000 at 12% for 10 years

YEAR	ANNUAL PAYMENT	PRINCIPAL PAID	PRINCIPAL BALANCE	INTEREST PAID	30% TAX SHIELD
0			$100,000		
1	$17,698	$ 5,698	94,302	$12,000	$ 3,600
2	17,698	6,382	87,919	11,316	3,395
3	17,698	7,148	80,771	10,550	3,165
4	17,698	8,005	72,765	9,693	2,908
5	17,698	8,967	63,799	8,732	2,620
6	17,698	10,043	53,756	7,656	2,296
7	17,698	11,248	42,509	6,451	1,935
8	17,698	12,598	29,911	5,101	1,530
9	17,698	14,109	15,802	3,589	1,077
10	17,698	15,802	- 0 -	1,896	569
TOTAL	176,984.00	100,000		76,984.20	23,059

TABLE 2
EQUAL ANNUAL PRINCIPAL PAYMENTS
LOAN OF $100,000 at 12% for 10 years

YEAR	ANNUAL PAYMENT	PRINCIPAL PAID	PRINCIPAL BALANCE	INTEREST PAID	30% TAX SHIELD
0			$100,000		
1	$22,000	$10,000	90,000	$12,000	$ 3,600
2	20,800	10,000	80,000	10,800	3,240
3	19,600	10,000	70,000	9,600	2,880
4	18,400	10,000	60,000	8,400	2,520
5	17,200	10,000	50,000	7,200	2,160
6	16,000	10,000	40,000	6,000	1,800
7	14,800	10,000	30,000	4,800	1,440
8	13,600	10,000	20,000	3,600	1,080
9	12,400	10,000	10,000	2,400	720
10	11,200	10,000	- 0 -	1,200	300
	166,000	100,000		66,000	19,800

(Cont'd)

Not all repayment plans are created equal (cont'd)

TABLE 1

Table I shows an amortized loan where the total blended payments of interest and principal are made in one equal annual payment. The amount of the annual payment is determined by looking up the appropriate amortization factor in a financial table, usually called "Installment to amortize". The amortization factor for $1 at 12 per cent for 10 periods (in this case the period is a year) is 0.1769842. Multiply the factor by $100,000 (the amount of the loan) and you have determined the annual payment of $17,698.42.

At the end of the first year, you (the borrower) would pay $17,698.42, which includes $12,000 of interest ($100,000 x 12%) and $5,698.42 of principal. The principal balance is then reduced to ($100,000 - $5,698.42) = $94,301.58, so interest of 12% times $94,301.58 = $11,316.19 is paid at the end of the second year. The schedule is calculated in this manner for 10 years until the principal balance is zero and the debt has been paid in full.

The annual payment (blended principal and interest) is the same each year but the amount of interest paid each year decreases and the amount of principal paid each year increases, as a portion of the blended annual payment.

TABLE 2

In contrast with Table I, the loan in Table 2 has a different type of repayment. Principal payments are fixed at the same amount each year, paying the same proportion of the total amount of loan principal. In this example $100,000 of loan principal is divided by 10 years for a fixed payment of $10,000 each year. Interest is calculated and paid on the outstanding balance of the principal, so the amount of interest paid decreases each year in the same way as the amortized loan in Table I.

October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Crop protection course still available

Farmers interested in learning ways to protect their crops from all kinds of pests and diseases can take advantage of a home study course this winter and apply their new knowledge in the field next year.

Registration is still available for Crop Protection '86, a course developed by Alberta Agriculture. More than 3,000 farmers from across Alberta, other provinces and the United States registered for the first program when it was introduced earlier this year.

The course teaches an integrated approach to controlling insects, disease, weeds and problem wildlife, says Pat Davidson, co-ordinator of the home study program.

It discusses ways to reduce chemical use; ways to practise prevention rather than control; and ways to be your own pest scout. As in other home study courses, the registrant has the option of writing a final exam.

"Feedback from those who have taken the course has been very positive," says Davidson. "We have received comments such as "my hat goes off to the people who organized Crop Protection '86...it was an excellent home study course...generally a well designed and constructed course."

For a $30 registration fee students will receive the eight printed lessons plus more than 12 supplementary publications. Working within their own time frame and at their own speed, the registrants go through each lesson. At the end of each section is a quiz.

When all lessons are complete, students have the option of writing a final exam. With the successful completion of the exam, the students receive a certificate from the department.

For further information and registration forms for the course, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or the Home Study Program at 7000 -113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or call 427-2404.

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October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Computer training hits the road

About 850 Alberta farmers are expected to cozy up to the keyboard over the next six months and hopefully they'll be playing a different tune by the time they're lessons are finished.

They won't be reading the notes of a Broadway melody, but they will be learning the score of how a personal computer works and how they can use it on the farm.

The second year of the three year Computer on Wheels program is getting underway across Alberta. Beginning in early November and running to the end of April, farmers from Peace River to Bow Island will be investing 12 hours over two days taking one of two computer courses.

Computer on Wheels is a co-operative project developed by Alberta Agriculture, the University of Alberta and IBM Canada Ltd. Last year, this road show of computer instruction reached 636 Alberta farmers.

And senior instructor Mark Olson, with the farm business management branch in Olds, says the number of participants is expected to increase this year.

Olson, and one other instructor, will visit about 85 centres in the province during this program year. Each instructor, equipped with a van and computer hardware and software supplied by IBM, will be introducing farmers to computers and showing them how this technology can be used as a management tool.

The instructors will teach either of two courses available: Introduction to Computers for Farm Use or Spreadsheed Application to Farm Management.

The introductory course is the starting point in learning about computers and their uses on the farm. It's a hands-on program allowing farmers to become familiar with computer lingo and learn that the machines don't bite. No previous computer experience or knowledge is necessary to attend.

(Cont'd)

Computer training hits the road (cont'd)

The spreadsheet course is intended for farmers who have a computer and a spreadsheet program. This course will teach a farmer how to apply spreadsheets to common farm managment problems.

Faced with more requests for courses than time would allow, Olson says the vans will be able to make it to 85 centres, beginning November 3 in Bonnyville and Westlock.

Anyone interested should check with their nearest district agriculturist. If registration is full for this year, farmers may be able to have their name added to the list for the 1987 program.

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October 27, 1986
For immediate release

Minimize stress in feeder calves

Anyone planning to feed calves this fall should gear their operation to get the young livestock gaining weight as quickly as possible after weaning, with the least amount of stress.

The first two weeks after weaning is the most critical time in the feeding period, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

It is important to make sure the calves are as comfortable as possible and on good rations from the start to minimize setbacks, says Dale Engstrom, a ruminant nutritionist with the department.

"With feed grain and forage apparently abundant throughout most of the province this year many cow-calf producers may be holding on to their calves and many grain growers are considering feeding calves as a method of marketing feed grains," he says.

"Calves are under considerable stress from weaning, adjusting to new surroundings, feed and water sources, and perhaps inclement weather. If they have been sold through an auction mart and transported to the new location the amount of stress suffered is even greater."

The feeder has two objectives in dealing with newly weaned or purchased calves. First, the calves should experience a minimal amount of health problems. Second, they should begin gaining weight as soon as possible.

"Adequate nutrition during the start up period plays an important part in meeting these objectives," says Engstrom. "The key to achieving adequate nutrition is getting the calves comfortable and eating feed as quickly as possible."

(Cont'd)

The nutritionist suggests six points to be followed in helping to meet the objectives.

1. Feed your own calves with the cow herd for a few days before weaning. This allows the calves time to learn what dry feed is. If this is done in the corral or lot that the calves will be using after they are weaned, they will also become familiar with the watering system. For purchased calves it is a good idea to include a few older animals such as yearlings, dry cows or even bulls with the calves to help them settle down and find the feed and water.
2. Use only highly palatable feed for the new calves. Good grass or grass-legume hay is an ideal feed for this time period. Pure alfalfa should be avoided due to bloat risk and the possibility of scouring on this high protein feed. Silage should be avoided, especially if it is the only source of forage, for a few days because it is a feed the calves will not be familiar with. Don't bed with straw, unless necessary, as some calves will stay back from the feedbunk and fill up on this poor quality roughage. Of course moldy, dusty or heat damaged feeds should be avoided because of poor palatability. The forage should be fed free choice allowing calves to consume as much as possible during the first day or two.
3. Normal water intake is a critical factor in getting stressed calves on feed. If calves can't find or won't use the water source, dehydration will increase stress. Many experienced feeders jam the float on the water bowl for the first day so that they overflow and attract calves to them. Others like to move in portable stock tanks to improve access to water. Whatever it takes to get calves drinking, it is worth the extra effort.

(Cont'd)

Minimize stress in feeder calves (cont'd)

4. Start grain feeding within a day or two. Stressed calves need the energy provided by grains. This also permits the feeding of necessary vitamin and mineral supplements by mixing them with the grain. During the first three days grain feeding at the level of 2-3 pounds per head per day is desirable. This can be increased a little each day so that calves are getting 1 per cent of body weight as grain within 14 days. Just about any feed grain can be used but oats is often the choice due to its slightly lower energy content and higher fibre level. If calves will not eat grain then the forage should be limited to encourage them to do so.
5. If silage is to be part of the feeding program it can be fed as part of the forage component beginning on the third or fourth day. It is an excellent feed once cattle become accustomed to it. It can easily be mixed with grain and therefore can be used to control grain intake.
6. Make sure that pen and feedbunk space fit the number and size of the calves you are feeding. If necessary, sort calves into groups based on size so that 350 pounders are not competing for feed and space with 600 pounders.

"As many experienced feeders know 'feed in the bunk' is not the same as 'feed in the calf' ", says Engstrom. "Adequate nutrition means a lot more than just offering a balanced ration. When planning the feeding program don't forget the little things that help get calves on feed. Also, develop with your veterinarian a suitable health program for your feeder calves."

Information on ration formulation is available from your Regional Livestock Specialist or Nutritionist.

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AGRI-NEWS

November 3, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Hay auction wasn't chicken feed 1
Beef symposium planned for February....3
Soil nurtient levels may be low....5
Custom operators should watch for deadline....8
Time to gear up financially....9
Editor's Note....11
Getting a feel for your cows....12
Conditioning costs are not out of line....15
Improved condition worth the effort....18
Grain commission offers testing service....22
Awards announced for "performance" work....24

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 3, 1986
For immediate release

Hay auction wasn't chicken feed

After selling more than 800 tons of hay at a value of just under $60,000, organizers of Alberta's first quality-related hay auction say it was well worth the effort.

"We're just delighted with the response," says Bjorn Berg, a regional forage specialist with Alberta Agriculture who helped the Lakeland Forage Association organize the October 25 auction near Bonnyville.

"There are always a few changes that could be made but, for a first time effort, it was a good success. The forage association was also pleased with the results."

The northeast Alberta auction was the first of its kind in the province, if not all of Canada, with each hay lot sold on the basis of a feed analysis.

Organized in what is considered a good hay year, the auction sold 806 tons of hay for $57,855 for an average value of $46.81 per ton. Broken down further this represents about 460 tons of first-cut hay which sold for an average of $33.90 per ton and about 350 tons of second-cut hay which went for an average of $63.50 per ton.

The going rate for hay before the auction was pegged at between $65 and $70 per ton for second-cut hay and $40 a ton for first-cut hay.

There were 42 lots of hay made up of large round bales and small square bales to be sold. Between 125 and 175 farmers attended the auction.

One of the objectives of the sale was to familiarize more farmers with feed test analysis. Prior to the auction Alberta Agriculture specialists conducted an on-site seminar explaining to farmers what the analysis means and how it can be incorporated into a feeding program.

It was intended the analysis would provide a good comparison for producers who often assess the quality of hay by its appearance and smell.

(Cont'd)

"The auction also helped to establish a more sophisticated market for hay," says Berg. "Virtually every other commodity we deal with has an established market on which prices are based. But not hay.

"This type of auction establishes supply and demand prices which will probably be quoted for some time."

Bonnyville district agriculturist, Ron Hockridge says the auction also showed that while quality is important there are other factors to be considered.

He says transportation costs, the size and weight of bales, moisture content of hay and factors such as these also have an influence on value.

"An important lesson from the auction is that it gave people some ideas on how to better market hay," says Hockridge. "They could see that there are probably different things they can do in preparing hay that makes it more saleable."

Berg says the decision on whether a similar auction will be organized next year rests with the forage association.

Although everyone was pleased with the auction results, he says suggestions for improvements included targeting future auctions to specific buyers.

He says there could be a hay auction specifically suited to dairy producers. Another auction could be targeted for acreage owners and horse breeders. A third auction could be geared for large-volume buyers.

The forage specialist says he doesn't think the type of forage year has much influence on the success of an auction. He says whether it is a good hay year or a poor hay year the auction itself won't force prices up or down. He says it will merely reflect the price dictated by supply and demand at the time of the sale.

November 3, 1986
For immediate release

Beef symposium planned for February

Alberta beef producers will be able to learn the management techniques for increasing the number of calves they can wean at a seminar planned for Edmonton in February.

Weaning a calf from every cow in the beef herd is the goal that will be addressed at the first Alberta Beef Symposium, set for February 10 and 11.

The symposium theme is Reproductive Efficiency.

Sponsored by the Alberta Cattle Commission and Alberta Agriculture, the symposium will see both producers and internationally known speakers from western Canada and the U.S. sharing their experience and knowledge with farmers and ranchers.

"The symposium will discuss several topics which will help beef producers improve production and profits from their herds by improving reproductive efficiency," says Ross Gould, head of the animal management section with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

Major emphasis will be put on the health and nutrition of cows, replacement heifers and bulls; and how these factors can affect the number and weight of calves weaned from the herd.

Following the presentations of the scientists, a panel of producers will discuss how they have used some of the modern management practices to get remarkable results in their own herd.

"For example, Dale Greig from Barrhead will tell how he achieves conception rates of 95 per cent from his cows, in a 42-day breeding season, and 85 per cent in replacement heifers," says Gould.

One session will pay special attention to trace mineral nutrition.

Alberta nutritionists are now beginning to recognize that feeds in many parts of the province may be deficient in one or more of the trace minerals such as selenium, copper, zinc, cobalt and iodine. Symposium speakers will discuss how these deficiencies could affect health and reproduction, and how deficiences can be corrected.

(Cont'd)

More information on the symposium can be obtained from the Alberta Cattle Commission and Alberta Agriculture staff.

Brochures and registration forms will be distributed at ACC election forums and through district agriculturist offices. Additional details are available from the planning committee chairman, Don Milligan, regional livestock specialist in Airdrie, at 948-5101.

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November 3, 1986
For immediate release

Soil nutrient levels may be low

Farmers should pay particular attention to fertilizer needs this fall because 1986 crop and weather conditions may have thrown "normal" soil nutrient levels for a loop.

Specialists with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, say nitrogen and sulphur levels in the soil may be greatly deficient this year due to a combination of factors.

Following the experience of Manitoba farmers who faced similar conditions in 1985, the Alberta specialists say the conditions underscore the need for proper soil analysis, checking nutrient levels down to 24 inches.

"Because of crop and weather conditions, nitrogen and sulphur levels in particular, may be more deficient than normal for cropping next year," says Don Laverty, co-ordinator of special projects with the soils branch. "The 1986 crop was heavy and thus extracted large quantities of nutrients from the soil. Heavy rains and cold temperatures have delayed harvest and fall cultivation. These conditions reduce the amounts of nitrogen and sulphur that is normally mineralized and carried over for use by crops next year."

The nitrogen and sulphur released by mineralization of soil organic matter is soluble and moves with soil water. With heavy fall rains there is also the potential that soluble nitrogen and sulphur will have been leached below the rooting zone of crops.

Leaching of large amounts of nitrogen below the root zone is unlikely except on sandy soils, he says. However, leaching of nitrogen and sulphur out of the shallow surface root zone could effect early crop development and the interpretation of soil tests.

(Cont'd)

Soil nutrient levels may be low (cont'd)

"Surface soil samples (0-6 inches) may not provide an accurate estimate of available nitrogen and sulphur supply," says Laverty. "Therefore fields should be sampled to two feet to provide a reliable estimate of nitrogen and sulphur supplies in field soils and to predict fertilizer requirements for next year's crops."

A quick survey of soil test labs in Alberta suggests that nitrogren and sulphur levels in soil samples taken this fall appear to be lower than normal, says Doug Penney, a soil specialist with the department.

"There is good evidence to indicate that nutrient supplies for next year may be quite different from average," he says.

To further support their concern over Alberta's soil nutrient levels the specialists noted the 1985 crop year in Manitoba was similar to the 1986 Alberta crop year.

"Good to excellent crop growth occurred early in the year followed by wet and cold conditions in the fall," says Penney. "Harvest was delayed and many crops were not threshed until the ground froze. Summaries of soil nitrogen reserves in Manitoba for the fall of 1985 were markedly lower than averages for the previous five years where weather and management conditions were normal."

Soil Test Nitrogen Levels for Manitoba

	Nitrate - Nitrogen to 24 inches	
	Fallow lb/ac	Stubble lb/ac
1985 wet and cold year	69	38
Average previous 5 normal years	107	57
Difference	38	19

(Cont'd)

Soil nutrient levels may be low (cont'd)

"Unfortunately similar numbers are not available for soil sulphur supplies, however recent communication indicates that sulphur deficiency in canola fields was considerably more severe this year than in previous years," says Penney.

Producers are urged to recognize the similarities between 1985 Manitoba crop and weather conditions and those for Alberta in 1986.

Farmers should take steps to monitor nitrogen and sulphur reserves for cropping in 1987," says Laverty. "This can best be done by taking soil test samples in increments down to the full 24-inch depth. Using a proper soil sampling tool the samples should be taken at intervals of 0-6 inches, 6-12 inches and 12-24 inches."

Results from these samples will provide valuable information on nitrogen and sulphur reserves and what amounts of fertilizer may be necessary to add for cropping in 1987.

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November 3, 1986
For immediate release

Custom operators should watch for deadline

Anyone wanting to be included in the newest edition of Alberta Agriculture's Directory of Custom Operators is advised that the deadline is December 31.

The publication, which is compiled by the farm business management branch at Olds, is a directory of businessmen in the province, who provide all kinds of custom services to farmers and ranchers from planting seed and fertilizing to baling hay and combining wheat.

"The directory will benefit both custom operators and farmers," says Garth Nickorick a farm managment economist at the Olds office. "Custom operators interested in being in the 1987 directory are required to submit their name, town, phone number and type of service provided, before the December 31 deadline."

Even if the operators were listed in the 1986 directory, they must still resubmit the required information to be included in the 1987 edition.

Each year, 9,000 copies of the directory are printed and distributed early in March.

The directory information should be sent to the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, TOM 1P0. For more information contact Nickorick, in Olds at 556-4247.

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November 3, 1986
For immediate release

Time to gear up financially

Regardless of how you keep your books, or the state of your farm cash flow, an Alberta Agriculture farm management course this fall, has something to offer all farmers and ranchers in the province.

"Gear Up Financially", first offered in 1985, will be presented again this year, starting this month, through at least 50 Alberta Agriculture district offices.

It's an intensive, practical, hands-on course which allows farm couples to work with financial experts in setting up and maintaining a proper set of books. It also teaches them how to use that information in making everyday farm management decisions.

Farmers needn't be alarmed if they feel they don't have a head for figures. The course presents in down-to-earth terms, management theories and principles which can be applied to their operation.

Offered in 10 sessions, the course is free but it does require a committment of time from farm couples interested in improving management abilities.

More than 96 per cent of farm couples who invested their time in the program last year said it was well worth the effort.

Gordon McNaughton, an economist with the farm business management branch in Olds, and provincial co-ordinator of the Gear Up Financially program, says the response to the first course was very positive.

Although there has been some refinement in curriculum the course will basically follow the same path as in 1985.

It will run from assessing the farm's current financial position, to setting goals, understanding the process of planning and decision making and monitoring and controlling the plan.

The material is developed on a provincial basis, but delivered locally by the district agriculturist, the district home economist and a farm economics specialist, usually hired from the local area. Each course is intended to handle about 15 couples.

(Cont'd)

Participating farm couples are asked to bring a copy of their farm records, or at least have a good idea of the figures that pertain to their operation.

"Through the course the farm couple will be putting their own real life figures into a record keeping system," says McNaughton. "They will work with those figures in making management decisions.

"People don't have to worry about confidentiality. There has to be trust between the participants and the instructors, but it's not that everyone's personal business will be discussed in front of the class.

"We have developed a model set of farm records for the course that will be used for detailed discussion purposes."

McNaughton says participating couples can arrange for individual and confidential counselling.

General guidelines describe participants as being reasonably well established farmers between 25 and 45 years olds, but McNaughton says there are no hard and fast rules.

"Last year participants ranged from people who were facing some real financial difficulty and needed management advice to those who were were reasonably well established and felt they already had a pretty good set of books to work from.

"The information is presented across the board and people take from it what they want."

The timetable for the 10-part course is arranged by each district agriculturist.

With registration already underway, McNaughton says any interested couples should contact their nearest district agriculturist or district home economist to see if a course is planned in their area.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Editor:

Following is a three part series prepared by Dr. Laura Rutter and Dale Engstrom with the beef cattle and sheep branch on the value of keeping cattle in good condition. There is no specific time element involved, although if you are able to use them, it is probably best to run them in the near future as farmers make plans to overwinter their cattle.

The articles are geared to run as a series or can stand alone depending on space available. Although figures have been incorporated into the body of the copy, for more detail see the tables which have been provided to illustrate Parts 2 and 3.

For further information contact Rutter or Engstrom.

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November 3, 1987
For immediate release

Getting a FEEL for your cows
Part 1 of 3

Insuring his cows carry adequate flesh could be one of the best investments a farmer can make, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Poor cow condition is the major cause of economic losses to cow-calf producers for several reasons, says Dr. Laura Rutter a reproductive physiologist with the beef cattle and sheep branch, in Edmonton.

Rutter isn't talking about making cows fat. Maintaining animals in moderate condition is the best way to make sure cows cycle properly, breed quickly, deliver a healthy calf and have sufficient milk production. She says there is a simple hands-on method of measuring how much flesh your cows are carrying, which is a good indication of condition.

Rutter says a farmer working with a veterinarian or livestock specialist can learn condition scoring in an afternoon and make an assessment of his herd. The best time to improve a cow's condition is during pregnancy.

"Cows in borderline to thin body condition take longer to come into heat after calving than do cows in moderate to good condition," says Rutter. "For example, research has shown that less than 70 per cent of cows that lost sufficient weight to become thin over the winter were cycling at the start of the breeding season."

On the other hand, more than 90 per cent of cows that at least maintained condition over winter were cycling. Cows that calve in moderate condition but lose weight after calving come into heat later than cows that maintain condition.

Other research has shown that less than 50 per cent of cows that lost condition within 60 days after calving were cycling. In contrast, 95 per cent of the cows that maintained condition after calving, were cycling.

(Cont'd)

Getting a FEEL for your cows (cont'd)

"In general, the more cows that calve in moderate to good condition and maintain their condition after calving, the more cows you'll have cycling at the start of the next breeding season," she says. "Conversely, the more cows that calve in borderline condition and fail to maintain condition after calving, the fewer cows you'll have cycling at the start of the breeding season."

The specialist says there are at least three reasons why it is important for cows to begin their heat cycles early after calving.

"Firstly, cows conceiving later in the breeding season, calve later the following year, resulting in a younger and lighter calf at weaning," says Rutter. " Secondly, the chances of getting your cow pregnant during the breeding season increase if she has had at least one estrous (heat) cycle before you start breeding.

"Thirdly, the cow in borderline to thin condition may not show heat and become pregnant during a defined (45 to 60 day) breeding season and you would lose next year's calf entirely.

"Now is the time to get your hands on your cows and determine their body condition. You get the greatest benefit from the least cost if you increase a cow's condition during pregnancy."

Rutter suggests farmers target cows to maintain a moderate body condition. Cows generally have a good overall appearance. The farmer can feel the spinous processes (between the last rib and hip bone) with firm pressure; and the fat over the ribs and on either side of the tail head feels spongy.

A farmer needs to increase body condition in thin cows if the animal's ribs are generally obvious with very little fat cover; spinous processes are rounded but easily felt; some fat deposits may be present around the tail head.

"You can let your cows "coast" if they are in fat condition," says the specialist.

Cows are considered fat when they appear fleshy, wasty; have large fat deposits over their ribs, around tail head and below vulva; "rounds" or "pones" may appear. A farmer should also condition score his cows again at calving and before breeding to make sure that they are maintaining proper condition for optimum conception rates.

(Cont'd)

Getting a FEEL for your cows (cont'd)

"Condition scoring is fast (20 to 30 seconds per animal) and easy to learn, says Rutter. "Spending an afternoon while you're pregnancy checking your herd with your local veterinarian, district agriculturist, regional livestock specialist, myself or any other experienced person who knows how to condition score is well worth the small effort and time investment."

For more detailed information regarding improving reproductive performance of your cows, contact Rutter at the beef cattle and sheep branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or phone 427-5304. For more information regarding ration formulation to suit individual needs contact Dale Engstrom, ruminant nutritionist, beef cattle and sheep branch, 6909 -116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2 or phone 436-9150.

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November 3, 1987
For immediate release

Conditioning costs are not out of line
Part 2 of 3

While some farmers think keeping cows in good condition means a high feed bill many will be surprised, as the song says, that this ain't necessarily so.

Two specialists with Alberta Agriculture says getting a cow into good to moderate condition and keeping her there is a wise economic move.

Dale Engstrom, a ruminant nutritionist with the beef cattle and sheep branch in Edmonton, says the cost of maintaining a cow in moderate condition is about the same as maintaining a thin cow.

Dr. Laura Rutter, a reproductive physiologist also with the branch in Edmonton, says a cow kept in moderate condition should conceive faster and raise a healthier and heavier calf than a cow kept in thin condition.

To demonstrate their point on cost Rutter and Engstrom have used four example cows.

"For the sake of discussion, let's assume that you overwinter your cows from November through February (approximately 120 days), start calving in March and put your cows out on good pasture at the end of May (approximately 90 days after calving)," she says.

Feed amounts and costs are calculated for four average British-breed cows in four different body conditions, being fed for a total of 210 days. The costs reflect feeding different combinations of brome hay, barley and alfalfa grass, depending on the results desired. (See Table 1 for details).

For Cow A, in moderate condition going into winter and only needing to be maintained in moderate condition, it will cost $111.38 for feed. For Cow B, in borderline to thin condition and it needs to increase one condition score (about 100 lb. over 100 days) before calving, it will cost $116.53 for feed. Cow C is also in thin condition going into winter, but it is decided to increase her condition (about 100 lb. over 60 days) after calving. Her feeding costs are $119.12. For Cow D, in thin condition going into the winter and staying in thin condition after calving, feed costs are $111.38.

(Cont'd)

Conditioning costs are not out of line (cont'd)

"Please keep in mind that these prices are reflective of very low feed prices and plentiful supply," says Rutter. "Under more typical conditions, feed prices might be twice to three times as high. You can see that it costs about $5 more per cow to increase condition during gestation and about $8 more per cow to increase condition after calving compared with the cost of maintaining a cow in moderate condition.

"You can also see that increasing condition of thin cows will require that you have some grain-feeding capabilities."

Rutter says there is a simple hands-on method a farmer can use in assessing the condition of his cows. She suggests contacting a district agriculturist, regional livestock specialist, or a veterinarian to learn the technique of condition scoring.

For more detailed information regarding improving reproductive performance of your cows, contact Rutter at the beef cattle and sheep branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or phone 427-5304. For more information regarding ration formulation to suit individual needs contact Dale Engstrom, ruminant nutritionist, beef cattle and sheep branch, 6909 -116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2 or phone 436 - 9150.

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"Conditioning costs are not out of line" TABLE 1

Feed Cost of Maintaining or Improving the Condition of Pregnant Beef cows.

Example	Current Condition	Management Decision	Feed During Pregnancy	Feed After Calving	Total Feed Used			Total Feed Cost
					Brome Hay	Barley	Alfalfa-grass	
COW A	Moderate (score 2.5)	Maintain in moderate condition	Brome Hay: 2520 lbs. (90 days at 20 lb/day + 30 days at 24 lb/day)	Brome Hay: 2430 lbs. (90 days at 27 lb/day)	4950 lbs. at $45/ton	---	-----	$111.38
COW B	Thin (score 1.5)	Increase during pregnancy	Brome Hay: 2080 lbs. (100 days at 16 lbs/day + 20 days before calving at 24 lbs/day) Barley: 700 lbs. (100 days at 7 lbs/day)	Brome Hay: 2430 lbs. (as for Cow A)	4510 lbs. at $45/ton	700 lbs. at $47.50/ tonne	-----	$116.53
Cow C	Thin (score 1.5)	Increase after calving	Brome Hay: 2520 lbs. (as for Cow A)	Brome Hay: 810 lbs. (30 days at 27 lbs/day) Alfalfa-grass: 1200 lbs. (60 days at 20 lbs/day) Barley: 660 lbs. (60 days at 11 lbs/day)	3330 lbs. at $45/ton	660 lbs. at $47.50/ tonne	1200 lbs. at $50/ton	$119.12
Cow D	Thin (score 1.5)	Do Nothing	Brome Hay: 2520 lbs. (as for Cow A)	Brome Hay: 2430 lbs. (as for Cow A)	4950 lbs. at $45/ton	---	-----	$111.38

November 3, 1987
For immediate release

Improved condition worth the effort
Part 3 of 3

Calves raised by cows in moderate condition should make more money for the farmer than calves raised by cows in thin condition.

Although there is no guaranteed formula, two specialists with Alberta Agriculture say money spent in improving or maintaining cows in moderate condition should be recouped through improved calf weaning weights.

Dr. Laura Rutter and Dale Engstrom say a cow in moderate condition will probably conceive faster, calve earlier and be able to raise a healthier, heavier calf by a given weaning date, over the offspring from a thin cow.

Rutter is a reproductive physiologist with the beef cattle and sheep branch in Edmonton. Engstrom is a ruminant nutritionist.

"Cows in borderline to thin condition at calving, wean lighter calves for at least two reasons," says Rutter. "Firstly, the hormones that come into play after calving cause her to use the fat "off her back" for milk production.

"If she's not carrying enough fat reserves, or if you're not feeding the thin cow to increase condition, she'll reduce her milk production.

"Secondly, if she was in the same condition last year, or remains in thin condition before breeding this year, she did or will likely conceive later in the breeding season."

Calves born later in the breeding season are younger and, therefore, lighter at weaning than if they'd been born earlier in the calving season.

To make their point Rutter and Engstrom describe the calves produced from four beef cows, in different stages of condition.

Cow A was in moderate condition at time of breeding and maintained that condition through to calving. Cow B was in thin condition at time of breeding but was improved to moderate condition by calving time. Cow C was thin at time of breeding and thin when the calf was born, but then was fed to improve her condition after calving. And Cow D was thin when bred and remained thin through calving and beyond.

(Cont'd)

"For the sake of discussion, let's assume that you wean your calves at an average of 220 days of age and that they were gaining 1.75 lb/day from birth to weaning," says the specialist.

Because of adequate condition, at the start of the breeding season, Cow A calved earlier than the other three, had a 500-pound calf when weaned which brought $525 ($1.05/lb.). Cow B had a 430 pound calf at weaning which brought $451. Cow C had a 410-pound calf at weaning which brought $430.50 and Cow D had a 396-pound calf at weaning which sold for $415.80. (For more details see Table 1).

Cows B, C and D calved 40 days (or two estrous cycles) later than Cow A because they were in thin condition during the previous breeding season.

Cows C may not be up to full milk production shortly after calving, even though the farmer increased her energy intake, because she is also trying to replenish body reserves. Cow D could not produce enough milk for her calf to reach its full potential gain because she remained in thin condition after calving.

"The bottom line is can you afford to keep your cows in moderate condition and the answer is yes," says Rutter. "In fact it may be more accurate to say you can't afford not to."

Again using the same four cows and their calves, the specialists compare the cost of feed to maintain the cows' condition overwinter and through calving with the returns from their respective calves. (For details see Table 2).

To maintain Cow A in moderate condition it cost $111.38. Her calf sold for $525, for a gross return of $413.62. Cow B: It cost $116.53 to feed a thin cow to increase her condition to moderate during gestation. Her calf sold for $451.50 for a gross return of $334.97. Cow C: It cost $119.12 to take a thin cow and increase her condition to moderate after calving. Her calf sold for $430.50 for a gross return of $311.38. Cow D: It cost $111.38 to maintain this cow in thin condition. Her calf sold for $415.80 for a gross return of $304.42 after feeding costs are subtracted.

(Cont'd)

Improved condition worth the effort (cont'd)

"Although unlikely, let's assume for the sake of discussion that feed costs and calf sale prices remain the same for next year's projected returns," says Rutter. "Cow A makes as much money next year as she did this year. Cow B calves 20 days (one estrous cycle) earlier next year because you've increased her condition before calving and then maintained her in moderate condition.

"Cow C calves late again next year because she's thin at calving, but you won't have to increase her condition over the winter if she's gained condition after calving. Cow D, which stayed in thin condition throughout, fails to conceive during the breeding season and produces no calf next year!"

The specialists say the best time to improve a cows condition is during pregnancy. There is a simple hands-on method which can be learned for making a condition assessment. Rutter suggests a farmer contact a district agriculturist, a regional livestock specialist or a veterinarian for help in learning condition scoring.

For more detailed information regarding improving reproductive performance of your cows, contact Rutter at the beef cattle and sheep branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H-5T6 or phone 427-5304. For more information regarding ration formulation to suit individual needs contact Dale Engstrom, ruminant nutritionist, beef cattle and sheep branch, 6909 -116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2 or phone 436 - 9150.

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"Improved condition worth the effort" TABLE 1

Expected Returns from Cows in Moderate vs. Thin Condition during Last Year's Breeding Season

Example	Cow Condition at Breeding	Cow Condition at Calving	Calf Birth Date	Calf Birth Weight	Age at Weaning	Average Daily Gain*	Weaning Weight	Calf Sale Price at $1.05/lb
COW A	Moderate (score 2.5)	Moderate	March 1	80 lbs	240 days	1.75 lbs	500 lbs	$525.00
COW B	Thin (score 1.5)	Moderate	April 10	80 lbs	200 days	1.75 lbs	430 lbs	$451.50
COW C	Thin	Thin, then increasing	April 10	80 lbs	200 days	1.65 lbs	410 lbs	$430.50
COW D	Thin	Thin	April 10	80 lbs	200 days	1.58 lbs	396 lbs	$415.80

*Rate of gain listed here is under optimum conditions. Keep in mind that calves from COWS C or D are more likely to develop health problems from birth to weaning and may gain considerably less than the optimum.

"Improved condition worth the effort" TABLE 2

Returns over Feed and Projected Sale of Next Year's Calf

Example	Condition Overwinter to Rebreeding	(from Table 1) Feed Cost	(from Table 2) Calf Sale	Thin Year's Return over Feed	Next Year's Return over Feed
COW A	Maintain Moderate	111.38	525.00	413.62	413.62
COW B	Thin, increasing to moderate during gestation	116.53	451.50	334.97	376.87
COW C	Thin, increasing to moderate after calving	119.12	430.50	311.38	329.62
COW D	Remain Thin	111.38	415.80	304.42	- 111.38*

November 3, 1986
For immediate release

Grain commission offers testing service

A free testing service is again being offered to producers of red spring wheat to help them evaluate the effectiveness of drying their grain.

"With the wet harvest conditions this year, many producers will be using a grain dryer," says Marshall Eliason, a farm machinery engineer with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

"Milling quality of wheat can be adversely affected by drying. By taking advantage of the service producers can determine the effectiveness of their dryer in maintaining optimum milling quality.

The service is provided by the Canadian Grain Commission.

Wheat that has been dried at excessive temperatures cannot produce a well-risen loaf of bread because the protein has been damaged. Milling wheat should never exceed 60°C (140°F) during any part of the drying cycle.

Careful control of drying temperature is needed to ensure safe drying levels. All dryers should be controlled by the temperature of the hot air before it enters the grain. Maximum hot air temperatures for safe drying vary depending on the type and make of dryer. Typical maximum hot air temperatures for milling wheat range from 60-70°C (140-158°F).

Users of heated air grain dryers may submit samples of red spring wheat before and after drying as follows:

- take a 500 gram (1 lb) sample before drying and mark it "BEFORE"
- take a 500 gram (1 lb) sample after drying and mark it "AFTER"
- identify your name, address, phone number, make and model of dryer, time taken to dry wheat, temperature of hot air before it reaches wheat, date of drying

(Cont'd)

Grain commission offers testing service (cont'd)

- if submitting sample through a elevator agent, identify the station, elevator company and agent's name
- package the two samples and information together and send by parcel post to: Farm Dried Grain, Grain Research Laboratory, Canadian Grain Commission, 1404 - 303 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 3G8.

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November 3, 1986
For immediate release

Awards announced for "performance" work

The search is on for two Alberta farmers who have shown through word and deed their concern for the quality of Alberta beef cattle.

The two will be selected from among cattlemen who have worked over the years to earn a world-wide superior reputation for Alberta's livestock.

They will be producers who know from first hand experience that building a quality herd of beef cattle doesn't happen by chance.

Nominations are now being accepted for the first Alberta Beef Cattle Performance Awards which will recognize producer excellence in, and dedication to, beef cattle performance testing in Alberta.

The awards, one for a purebred producer and the other for a commerical producer, are sponsored by the Alberta Beef Cattle Performance Test Advisory Committee and Alberta Agriculture.

"Alberta is recognized over much of the world as the source of high quality beef cattle seed stock," says Chuck Huedepohl, assistant livestock supervisor with Alberta Agriculture. "One of the reasons for this reputation is the superior performance of Alberta's beef cattle. This outstanding performance has not come about by accident -- it is the result of Alberta breeders' dedicated pursuit of animals carrying superior performance traits."

The award, which is expected to be presented annually, will recognize the farmer's contribution to maintaining and improving the quality of beef cattle.

Any beef cattle producer in Alberta is eligible for the award which will be presented early in 1987. Deadline for making nominations is December 31.

The award selection committee will apply their own performance test to the list of nominees.

(Cont'd)

Awards announced for "performance" work (cont'd)

As part of the criteria they will be interested in the farmer's background, the type of performance testing done on his herd and type of data collected. The committee will look at what success the producer has had in improving traits in his herd, what breeding program is used and how performance records are used in making management decisions.

The committee is also interested in whether the nominee has taken any leadership or educational roles in promoting the value of performance testing.

For more information on the awards or application forms contact any Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist or Chuck Huedepohl at 427-5085.

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November 10, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

"Farming for the Future" program extended..............................1
Agreements signed in Mexico.......................................3
Register now for conference.......................................6
Dorothy Rigney joins 4-H Hall of Fame.............................7
Swather can be modified for heavier jobs.........................11
National young farmers selected..................................13
Investment tax credits being phased out..........................14
Massage technique can improve pregnancy rate.....................18
Alberta meat and livestock export remains steady.................20
Good weather arrived late..21

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Farming for the Future program extended

Agriculture Minister Peter Elizinga has announced the extension of Alberta's "Farming for the Future" agricultural research program.

The minister stated, "We are committing $25 million to the program over five years to help ensure the long-term survival of Alberta's farms."

Mr. Elzinga noted that since 1977, when the original program was announced, over 700 research and demonstration projects have been funded. An investment of $40 million from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund has supported agricultural research projects at public and private research organizations across the province. The projects deal with production and marketing problems facing the industry.

"Many good results have come out of this program," said the minister. "I am confident that the new funds will help us build on that strong foundation. Alberta is a leader in agricultural research in Canada."

Mr. Elzinga stated, "We are particularly pleased with the number of producers who have participated in the "On-Farm Demonstrations" of new agricultural technology. These progressive producers form the leading edge of those who are bring a 21st century agriculture to this province."

The On-Farm Demonstration Program is the practical application side of Farming for the Future. Under the program, farmers working with departmental specialists and extension staff conduct scientifically controlled field tests of new technology. Over 300 producers have participated in the On-Farm Demonstration Program since 1982.

Cont'd)

Mr. Elzinga emphasized the need for reasearch co-operation.

"At a time of fiscal restraint, the responsible use of public funds dictates that the major agricultural research players in the province, governments, universities and private industry, must co-ordinate their efforts towards achieving positive results."

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Contact:	Jim Armet Executive Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture Phone 427-2137	Dr. Art Olson, Assistant Deputy Minister Research and Resource Development Phone 427-1957

November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Agreements signed in Mexico

Alberta Associate Minister of Agriculture, Shirley Cripps has announced the signing of two agreements in Guadalajara, Mexico which will have long term benefits for agricultural producers in both Alberta and Mexico.

The associate minister said the agreements are a strong indication of the growing trade relationship between the two governments.

Mrs. Cripps stated, "I think the personal contact made on the trip was very important and is the key to the development of markets. It also illustrates that we are serious in developing a greater trade relationship with Mexico and that the Alberta government is behind the initiatives of the private sector."

The associate minister had just returned from the Mexican city where she and Mexican Agriculture Minister Eduardo Pesquiera Olea recently signed a protocol agreement to facilitate trading between Mexico and Alberta.

Mrs. Cripps was leading a delegation from the Alberta/Canada All Breeds Association (ACABA) and the Alberta Swine Breeders Association at a major livestock show in Guadalajara.

ACABA, a promotional organization for Alberta livestock, and the Alberta government have had a presence in the Latin American country for the past 10 years. Mexico has become an important market for Alberta farmers. Last year about $2 million worth of Alberta cattle were sold in Mexico. This year more than 145,000 tonnes of Canadian canola seed, mostly from Alberta, have been sold to Mexican processing plants. Mexico has become the number two market in the world for Canadian canola seed, following Japan.

The one document, the Alberta/Mexico Co-operation Agreement is considered a protocol agreement setting out general areas of co-operation between the two governments. The other document is a working agreement between ACABA and the Cattleman's Union of Guadalajara describing each group's responsiblities in a joint bull testing program.

(Cont'd)

Agreements signed in Mexico (cont'd)

Alberta's Associate Minister of Agriculture Shirley Cripps signs a protocol agreement with the Mexican department of agriculture, as part of a growing trading relationship between Alberta and Mexico. Joining Mrs. Cripps at the recent ceremony in Guadalajara were, seated from left, the Mexican Minister of Agriculture, Eduardo Pesquiera Olea; the Governor of the State of Jalisco, Enrique Alvarez del Castillo; and the President of the Cattlemen's Union for the State of Jalisco, Rodolfo Villasenor U. Mrs. Cripps was in Mexico with a delegation of Alberta producers attending a major livestock show.

(Cont'd)

Agreements signed in Mexico (Cont'd)

The associate minister said, "The protocol agreement allows for joint programs between Alberta and Mexico to be developed. This could include private enterprise, import and export programs and technical and cultural exchanges. It really provides for all kinds of opportunities."

A working committee including representatives from both governments has been struck to determine the type of programs suitable under the agreement, including such commodities as canola and swine.

The bull testing program agreement covers on-farm demonstrations of 17 Alberta beef bulls, shipped to Mexico earlier this year.

Working with the Cattleman's Union of Guadalajara, the Mexican government has distributed the bulls to selected ranches to be used in trial breeding programs with the native Brahma-type cattle of Mexico.

The program is being monitored to determine ease of calving, weights of calves, rate of gain and weaning weights. Successful results should lead to the increased sale of Alberta beef cattle breeding stock to Mexico.

Mrs. Cripps said she is confident these agreements will provide the necessary opportunities to expand trade and she looks forward to the continuation of the excellent co-operation received to date.

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November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Register now for conference

Any Alberta producer interested in learning how to promote his or her own agricultural product has only about 10 days left to register for a conference planned for Lethbridge.

"Beef, pork, lamb, poultry, eggs, vegetables and pulses, dairy products, grains and oilseeds . . . all are examples of Alberta food products," says provincial food specialist Cathy Edge. "If you are a producer of these products, you won't want to miss the one-day agricultural product promotion conference called "Your Product Is On The Line"."

The home economics branch, Alberta Agriculture and the County of Lethbridge Agricultural Service Board are co-sponsoring the November 25 conference at the Lethbridge Lodge.

Edge, who works with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, says the conference will address several questions important to producers.

Speakers will cover issues such as how consumers make choices in the supermarket; explain how to respond to nutrition misinformation about a product; discuss what free-trade will mean to the sale of products; describe what goes into the making of a farm news story; and relate experiences that will help others promote their own products.

Organizers have set November 21 as the registration deadline. The fee is $15.

Anyone interested in the day-long conference should contact their local Alberta Agriculture district office for a registration brochure.

For further information contact Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and nutrition specialist, or Cathy Edge, food specialist, both in Edmonton at 427-2412 or district home economist Linda Barvir in Lethbridge at 329-5238.

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Contact: Cathy Edge
427-2412

Do not release until
after November 8, 1986

Dorothy Rigney joins 4-H Hall of Fame

A city girl who had never even heard of 4-H until after she was married has been inducted as the newest member of Alberta Agriculture 4-H Hall of Fame.

Dorothy Rigney, of Bon Accord, who spent nearly 20 years involved in 4-H programs at the local, regional and provincial level joined 21 other Albertans as a member of the hall of fame at ceremonies in Calgary, November 8.

Rigney, who got involved in 4-H in the late 1950's as a way to provide her own children with an activity, went on to become a leading figure in the provincial 4-H program and was one of the key people responsible for the creation of the 4-H camp at Battle Lake.

The new hall of fame member was born and raised in Edmonton and knew very little about rural life when she married Ray Rigney and moved to Bon Accord, a community just north of the provincial capital.

"I came from the city. I had never been in 4-H myself and I didn't know anything about it," said Rigney in a recent interview. "I had daughters of my own and I was looking for some kind of activity for them to get involved in. I talked to the district home economist and she suggested I look into 4-H. It was a real learning experience."

Over the next 20 years she logged an impressive record of service and leadership in the organization at all levels.

From 1960 to 1978 she was leader of the Bon Accord Clothing Club and the Bon Accord Garden Club. She also served as an adult committee member of the Bon Accord Beef Club.

At the local level, which encompasses the Municipal District of Sturgeon she served as vice-president of the Sturgeon council in 1965. Rigney served as president from 1966 to 1967 and attended a variety of meetings over the 10 years.

(Cont'd)

Dorothy Rigney joins 4-H hall of fame (cont'd)

Dorothy Rigney of Bon Accord
Alberta's newest
4-H Hall of Fame member

Dorothy Rigney joins 4-H Hall of Fame (cont'd)

In 1966 she began attending meetings of the regional council which encompasses clubs in the M.D. of Sturgeon, and counties of Stony Plain and Strathcona. Rigney served as vice-president of the regional council in 1968, and was also involved with the northwest council, which includes clubs in the Westlock and Barrhead districts.

At the provincial and national level she attended the 1967 Montana Conference as a leader and also represented the Alberta council in 1973 at the Saskatchewan 4-H Conference. She also attended Canadian council meetings.

It was while she sat as a member of the Alberta 4-H Council that she marked one of the highlights of her service to 4-H.

Although she credited a group of people with the accomplishment, colleagues say it was Rigney who spearheaded the movement to establish the 4-H camp at Battle Lake.

"Dorothy was the instigator of the Battle Lake project," said Margaret Borle, another long-time 4-H leader. "There were people who said it couldn't be done, but Dorothy had the courage and the determination to see it through."

The Alberta 4-H Centre, built on the shores of Battle Lake, 50 kilometres west of Wetaskiwin, was developed to provide educational, recreational and social activities for 4-H members and leaders in an outdoor setting.

In November 1971 the council began work on establishing a permanent 4-H camp. Rigney served as treasurer for the council in 1973 and became president in 1976. In 1977 the Battle Lake property was purchased.

Rigney also worked with the 4-H Foundation serving as president in 1978. She retired fully from 4-H work in 1980.

Along with her 4-H work Rigney also was involved in several community organizations including the Anglican girls group, the Bon Accord community centre, the Ladies Community Club and the Altar Guild of the Bon Accord Anglican Church.

(Cont'd)

"In receiving this award I have many different feelings," says Rigney. "I certainly enjoyed the people and the work and the challenges provided over the years. It often involved time away from home and I have to thank my family for the support they have given me.

"I now have grandchildren and I hope that some of the work that has been done will continue to provide activities and opportunities for them."

Rigney was honored at the 4-H Hall of Fame banquet held in conjunction with the annual 4-H leaders conference at the Westin Hotel in Calgary.

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Contact: Henry Wiegman
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November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Swathers can be modified for heavier jobs

Farmers frustrated because their standard swather can't handle a heavy or bulky crop should consider that with a cutting torch and welding skills they can probably modify their equipment to do almost any job.

The process will take some time and cost up to $5,000 depending on materials and parts available, says a farm machinery engineer with Alberta Agriculture, but the farmer should end up with equipment that can easily be converted to handle most crop conditions.

The bottom line should be more efficient use of equipment, a crop that dries faster in the swath and improved harvesting ability.

The idea is to take an existing swather and modify it to accommodate a wider header, says John Kienholz, with agriculture engineering services in Edmonton.

The department has prepared a publication which details how the conversion is made. Kienholz stresses that each farmer should get individual advice before they start cutting chunks out of the swather frame.

Kienholz says once the widening modifications are complete the farmer can convert the equipment back to the narrow header by installing roller brackets at the desired width. Since the rollers are being brought closer together longer canvasses will be needed.

"Self propelled swathers with narrow center discharges have problems laying a desirable swath in bulky crops such as fababeans, canola and heavy stands of cereal grains," says Kienholz. "The swaths are narrow, dense and often bunched. This results in poor drying with the subsequent loss of quality, yield and a delay in threshing."

He says the narrow, bunched swaths also feed poorly into modern combines. When the width of the swath is not compatible with the width of the combine, threshing and separating capacity are lost. The bunched swath further reduces combine capacity by uneven feeding and plugging.

(Cont'd)

Swathers can be modified for heavier jobs (cont'd)

Following the step-by-step instructions the farmer will be able to widen the header and the swather chasis on equipment which has either single or double rear caster wheels.

Keinholz says before a farmer sparks the cutting torch he should get specialized advice on modifications based on his type of swather, its usage and conditions.

For a copy of the publication "Bulky Swaths Improved with Modified Swathers" (Agdex 745-1) contact the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6, or any Alberta Agriculture district office.

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Contact: John Kienholz
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November 10, 1986
For immediate release

National young farmers selected

Representatives from British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec were selected the Outstanding Young Farmers for 1986, at ceremonies in Calgary recently.

Although a southern Alberta farmer was among the eight regional finalists competing for the national award, William Van Rootselaar, a Fort Macleod dairy farmer, was not among the final choices.

This year's winners included Allen J. Looy, a dairy farmer from Errington, British Columbia, Murray Ferguson, a mixed and dairy farmer from Ancaster, Ontario and Fernard Fillion, a mixed and dairy farmer from Lyster Quebec.

The winners received the W.R. Motherwell Award which signifies they are among the best farmers in Canada. The contest is operated by the Canada Jaycees, and sponsored by the Bank of Montreal, John Deere Limited and Hoechst Canada Inc. The event was hosted this year by the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede.

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Contact: Don Mackenzie
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November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Investment tax credits being phased out

Alberta farmers thinking about putting up a building, buying new machinery or other farm equipment should realize that a popular federal tax incentive program is being phased out.

The Investment Tax Credit which many farmers have used to reduce their basic federal tax payment will be phased out by 1989.

The tax credit was created to help stimulate spending by providing farmers with a tax break. The rate of tax credit varies depending on where a farmer lives, says Merle Good, an economist with Alberta Agriculture.

For farmers living in the southern half of the province (south of Edmonton), the proposed changes to begin January 1, 1987 will reduce the current 7 per cent rate to 5 per cent in 1987, followed by 3 per cent in 1988 and zero in 1989.

For those in the northern half (north of Edmonton) the current rate of 10 per cent will be reduced to 7 per cent in 1987, 3 per cent in 1988 and zero in 1989.

This means that where a qualified property is purchased for $100,000, the investment tax credit allowed against federal tax payable will be:

Current rate	10%	7%
1986	$10,000	$7,000
1987	$ 7,000	$5,000
1988	$ 3,000	$3,000
1989	$ 0	$ 0

"Farmers in a good financial position, facing a large tax bill should take advantage of the current tax credit allowed before January 1, 1987 when the tax credit will be reduced from the current rates," says Good, a tax specialist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "Don't buy a machine just to decrease taxes but use all available tax benefits if you decide to invest your money."

(Cont'd)

Explanations of the investment tax credits and forms for calculating them, are available in the 1985 "Farmers Income Tax Guide". Assuming that the 1986 tax forms will be nearly the same as those provided in 1985, farmers can plan their investment in 1986 by using the 1985 forms.

The purchase price of the equipment or machine, referred to as the investment cost in the guide, is the key amount on which calculations are made. The calculated amount of investment tax credit claimed for the income tax year when the machine was purchased must be subtracted from the investment cost before capital cost allowance is claimed.

By completing Section 2 or form T2038 (IND) Rev. 85, (Part A) farmers can estimate the total tax credit available. The next step is estimating the allowable claim for 1986 by first estimating the amount of federal tax payable expected for 1986, and subtracting that amount from the total credit available. The amount left over can be claimed by being carried back three years or forward up to seven years. Another option is to apply for a 40 per cent refund of the unused current year credit. Farmers can use form T2038 (IND) Rev. 85 (Part B) to estimate the carry back or refund.

Craig Edwards, farm planning specialist with the branch, has estimated first year maximum tax benefits for three different situations, for tractors purchased in 1986 as compared with purchases in 1987.

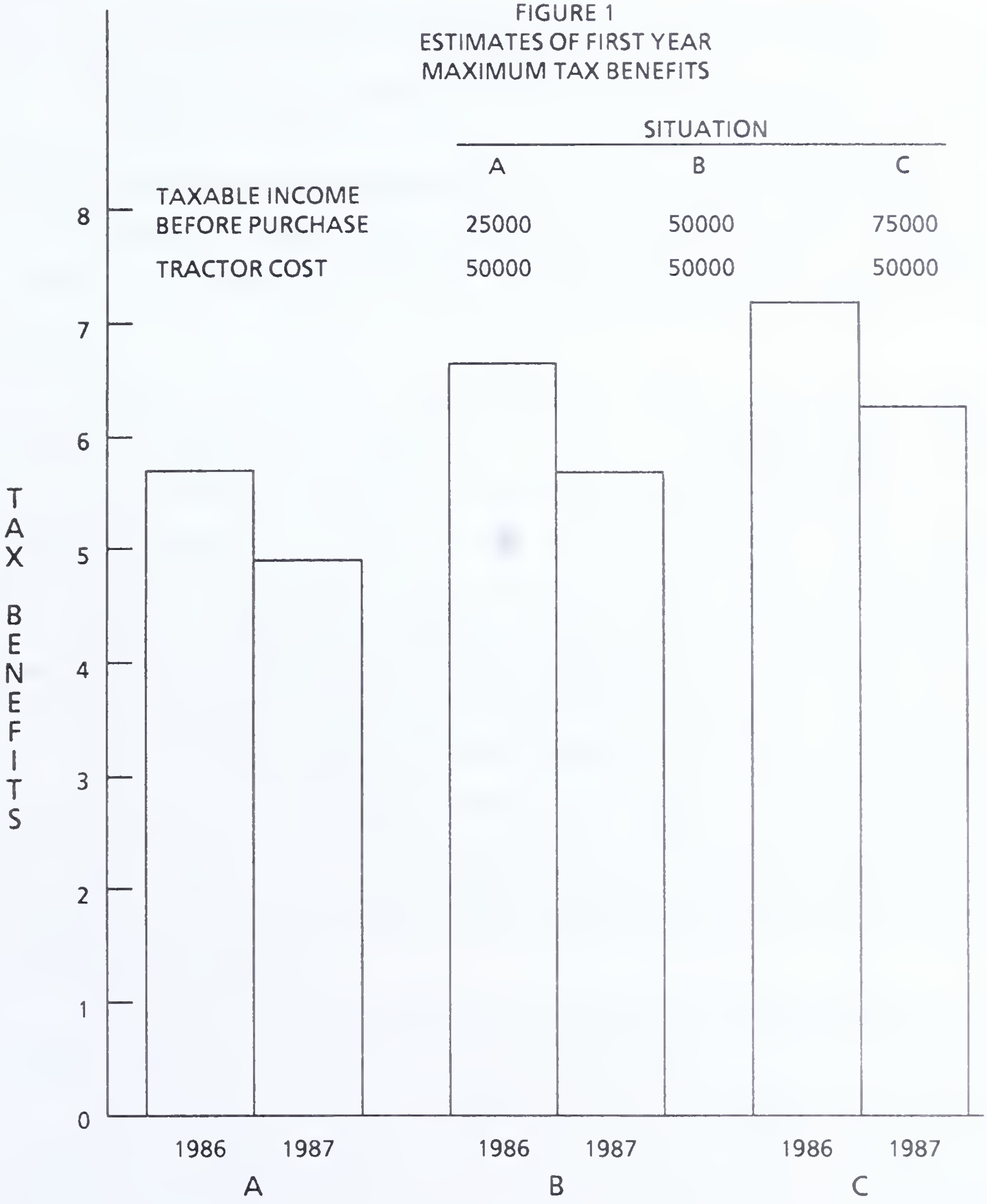
The estimates are shown in the bar graph Figure 1.

Tractor investment cost for all three situations is $50,000 but taxable income before purchase is $25,000, $50,000 and $75,000 for Situation A, B and C respectively.

Maximum tax benefits are the sum of investment tax credit claims plus the tax payable decreases from claiming maximum capital cost allowances for each year in each situation, with the rate being 30 per cent by one-half for the first year.

(Cont'd)

FIGURE 1
ESTIMATES OF FIRST YEAR
MAXIMUM TAX BENEFITS



	SITUATION A	SITUATION B	SITUATION C
TAXABLE INCOME BEFORE PURCHASE	25000	50000	75000
TRACTOR COST	50000	50000	50000

(Cont'd)

Investment tax credits being phased out (con't)

The bar graph shows that tax benefits increase as taxable income increases, with lower tax benefits in all three situations for tractors purchased in 1987 when the proposed 5 per cent rate of investment tax credit is used.

"Differences in maximum tax benefits from 1986 to 1987 for A, B & C are $793, $957 and $937," says Edwards. "So farmers in similar tax situations can use these estimates to help make a decision".

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Contact: Merle Good
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November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Massage technique can improve pregnancy rate

A simple massage technique which can be used when cattle are being bred by artificial insemination could help increase the pregnancy rate by 20 per cent, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Dr. Laura Rutter, a reproductive physiologist with the department in Edmonton, says research reports from Texas and Montana show that pregnancy rates through artificial insemination can be increased by clitoral massage.

Although there is no clear answer as to why the massage helps, the evidence is there that it works.

The clitoris is a small erectile piece of tissue which is the female equivalent of the male penis, says the specialist. It is located just inside the lower lip of the vulva. To apply clitoral massage, grasp the lower lip of the vulva between the thumb and forefinger and gently but firmly rub the tissue between your thumb and forefinger for three to 10 seconds after the inseminating rod has been removed.

"Three and four-year old cows consistently show the greatest benefit from clitoral massage (about 20 per cent increase in pregnancy rate over unstimulated controls)," says Rutter. "Two and five-year old cows typically show a 10 to 12 per cent increase in pregnancy rate with clitoral massage, but heifers in their first breeding season show no benefit over unstimulated animals."

Other factors which influence the benefit of clitoral massage include technician effects and days from calving.

Some technicians may be more effective at applying clitoral stimulation. Conversely, a small number of technicians may stimulate the female tract enough during the normal course of insemination that no improvement in pregnancy rates is seen when clitoral stimulation is applied. While it is generally accepted that pregnancy rates increase as days from calving increase, clitoral massage may have its greatest effect during the early postpartum period.

Cont'd)

Massage technique can improve pregnancy rate (cont'd)

"Researchers do not know exactly how clitoral massage works to increase pregnancy rates to A.I. or why it works in some females and not in others," says Rutter.

It is known that uterine motility is increased in cows during bull exposure. Sperm transport through the uterus to the egg waiting in the oviduct may be enhanced by increased uterine motility.

It is also known that clitoral stimulation, either by the technician during A.I. or by the bull during natural service, can shorten the interval from the onset of estrus to insemination and ovulation.

"Perhaps this shortened interval creates a better timing between insemination and ovulation, for optimum fertilization to occur," says Rutter. "Overall, clitoral stimulation has a positive effect on pregnancy rates to artificial insemination, regardless of age, interval from calving or breed of the female."

For further information, contact Dr. Rutter, Animal Breeding Section, Beef Cattle and Sheep Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6 or call 427-5304.

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Contact: Dr. Laura Rutter
427-5304

November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta meat and livestock export remains steady

Alberta's sale of meat and livestock to the United States in the first half of 1986 remained on par with 1985, inspite of a tariff imposed on Canadian hogs entering the U.S..

The province actually faired much better than the rest of the country. Nationally there was a 20 per cent drop in meat and livestock sales compared to the same period in 1985.

Bill Schissel, a trade statistician with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton says, from January to June, Alberta exports of cattle, hogs, beef and pork to the U.S. amounted to $126.9 million compared to $127.2 million for the same period in 1985.

A sharp decrease in live hog exports for 1986 was offset by increased exports of live cattle, beef and pork.

Alberta managed to maintain its sales inspite of the 4.39 cent-a-pound countervailing duty imposed on hogs by the U.S. last year.

"The Canadian figures for this same period shows that the total value for cattle, hogs, beef and port exports to the U.S. was down approximately 20 per cent over 1985," says Schissel.

From January to June 1986 the value of shipments of these commodities was $456.7 million whereas for the corresponding period in 1985 it was $567.4 million.

"Along with a threefold decrease in Canadian exports of live hogs, was a substantial decrease in live cattle and beef exports," says the statistician. "The one bright spot on the Canadian scene so far in 1986 has been pork exports to the U.S. Up until the end of August 1986 they amounted to $309,820,000 almost 20 per cent ahead of 1985.

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Contact: Bill Schissel
427-4011

November 10, 1986
For immediate release

Good weather arrived late

Although a month late arriving, the fine fall weather during October was more than welcome, says a weather specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Maximum temperatures were in the mid-teens to the low 20s most of the month, says Peter Dzikowski, agricultural weather resource specialist with the conservation and development branch in Edmonton. The warm temperature and absence of precipitation during the two middle weeks of October made for much needed great harvesting weather.

Average October temperatures were about 2 to 3°C above normal. High Level recorded an October average temperature of 1.3°C, exactly the long term average. Whitecourt at 7.1°C was 3.7°C warmer than normal for October. Whereas, Medicine Hat, the warmest at 9.0°C was only 1.6°C above normal.

October precipitation amounts were widely varied, ranging from only 8.8 mm at Edson, one third of their long term normal, to 39 mm at High Level, two and one-half times their normal amount. Most of central Alberta, from north to south reported about 20 to 30 mm of precipitation. The eastern and western parts of the province reported precipitation amounts of 10 to 15 mm.

"The fine weather of October gave farmers a chance to catch up on harvesting and fall field work operations," says Dzikowski. "But the last few days of the month provided a reminder that winter is fast approaching as temperatures dropped to the minus teens and even minus 20s at some locations."

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
DEC - 5 1986

November 17, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Nearly 40,000 calves registered for program..........................1
Canada should try a new trade angle................................5
Good response to moisture management conference.....................8
Dairy processing specialist for Lethbridge..........................9
Editor's Note..10
Estate planning course available...................................11
Planning to die..13
No price tag on the family unit....................................15

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 17, 1986
For immediate release

Nearly 40,000 calves registered in program

There is a 25 per cent increase this year in the number of calves in Alberta being readied for the auction mart under the provincial preconditioning program.

Nearly 40,000 young animals will receive at least 45 days of special treatment before they are shipped to the sale-ring and feedlot this fall and winter.

Alberta Agriculture officials say the dramatic increase in the number of calves registered this year results from the combination of three factors: the program has a good reputation; there appears to be plenty of low cost feed available; and cattle prices are reasonably good.

This is the sixth year for the Alberta Certified Preconditioned Feeder Program. It basically involves a farmer following weaning and feeding guidelines, under the supervision of a veterinarian, to better prepare his calves for the stress of the sale and the feedlot.

The effort should return a double dividend to the farmer. Not only will the calves be heavier on sale day, but he will also receive a premium price from buyers.

Brian Harris, of Red Deer, supervisor of the preconditioning program says as of November 5, 39,650 tags have been issued to farmers registered under the program representing a net increase of 25 per cent across the province.

"Large increases occurred in the central and eastern parts of the province," he says. "The south and Peace River areas have maintained similar numbers to last year. A decline in numbers occurred in the northwest, Westlock-Barrhead area and in the Calgary area."

Dr. Terry Church, with the health management branch in Edmonton, says the "significant increase" this year came as a "pleasant surprise" to program managers.

(Cont'd)

Church says the increase reflects the growing awareness among farmers of the preconditioning program and the growth of its successful reputation.

Along with more cattle this year, three more preconditioned calf sales have been scheduled, running later into the season than in the past. The line-up of 22 sales starts November 24 and will he held at several centres across the province. The last scheduled sale is January 23.

For more information on the program contact Brian Harris at 340-5336 or Terry Church at 436-9343. For details on the numbers and quality of calves being sold contact the local auction sale manager.

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(Editor's Note: Attached, for your use, is a list of the scheduled preconditioned calf sales in the province.)

Nearly 40,000 calves registered in program (cont'd)

1986 ALBERTA PRECONDTIONED CALF SALES

(dates set as of November 5, 1986)

November 24	Monday 12 noon	Innisfail Auction Market (Innisfail 227-3166)
November 27	Thursday 12:30 p.m.	Killam Auction Market (Killam 672-2114/662-2722)
November 28	Friday 1 p.m.	Lacombe Auction Market (Lacombe 782-3825)
November 28	Friday 10 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101)
December 1	Monday 10 a.m.	Clyde Modern Livestock (Clyde 348-5893)
December 2	Tuesday 11 a.m.	Stettler Auction Market (Stettler 742-2368)
December 3	Wednesday 10 a.m.	Highwood Livestock Auction (High River 653-3343)
December 3	Wednesday 12 noon	Innisfail Auction Market (Innisfail 227-3166)
December 4	Thursday 10 a.m.	Ft. Macleod (Ft. Macleod 553-3315)
December 5	Friday 11 a.m.	Balog Auction Services (Lethbridge 320-1980)
December 5	Friday 10 a.m.	Edmonton Public Stockyards (Edmonton 473-5776)
December 5	Friday 10 a.m.	Grande Prairie Auction Market (Grande Prairie 532-3949)
December 5	Friday 1 p.m.	Rimbey Auction Market (Rimbey 843-2439)
December 5	Friday 1 p.m.	Cole's Auction Market (Rocky Mountain House 845-6103)
December 6	Saturday 12 noon	Vold Jones Vold Auction (Ponoka 783-3177/783-5561)
December 8	Monday 10 a.m.	Olds Auction Market (Olds 556-3655)

(Cont'd)

Nearly 40,000 calves registered in program (cont'd)

December 8	Monday 11 a.m.	Burnt Lake Auction Market (Red Deer 347-6100)
December 9	Tuesday 1 p.m.	St. Paul Auction Market (St. Paul 645-3588)
December 12	Friday 11 a.m.	Balog Auction Services (Lethbridge 320-1980)
December 12	Friday 10 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101)
December 12	Friday 12 noon	Provost Livestock Exchange (Provost 753-2369)
January 23	Friday 12 noon	Provost Livestock Exchange (Provost 753-2369)

November 17, 1986
For immediate release

Canada should try a new trade angle

Improved trading relationships between other countries could be a silver cloud with a black lining as far as Alberta farmers are concerned.

It's good news to see nations getting along better, but that growing friendship could cut into the export of Canadian wheat, which strikes a nerve here at home.

A specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton says it may be a good time for Canada to look into new approaches in selling its commodities to foreign countries.

Bill Schissel, a trade statistician with the department, says the new trade agreement between Argentina and Brazil is a good example of the good-news/bad-news situation.

"In July of this year Argentina and Brazil signed a trade agreement which initially attempts to eliminate trade barriers for all commodities between the two countries," says Schissel. "The significance of such an agreement for Canada, and Western Canada in particular, is that it will accommodate increased Brazilian purchases of Argentine wheats."

One of the provisions set forth in the accord is for Brazil to purchase 7.2 million metric tonnes of Argentine wheat over the next five years, starting with 1.44 million tonnes in the 1986/87 crop year.

"Brazil has been a stable, growing purchaser of Canadian wheat and attempts at closer economic integration between these two countires will likely cause some erosion of the Brazilian market for Canadian wheat."

With civilian administrations in place in both Brazil and Argentina, co-operation between the two nations at both government and industry levels has been increasing.

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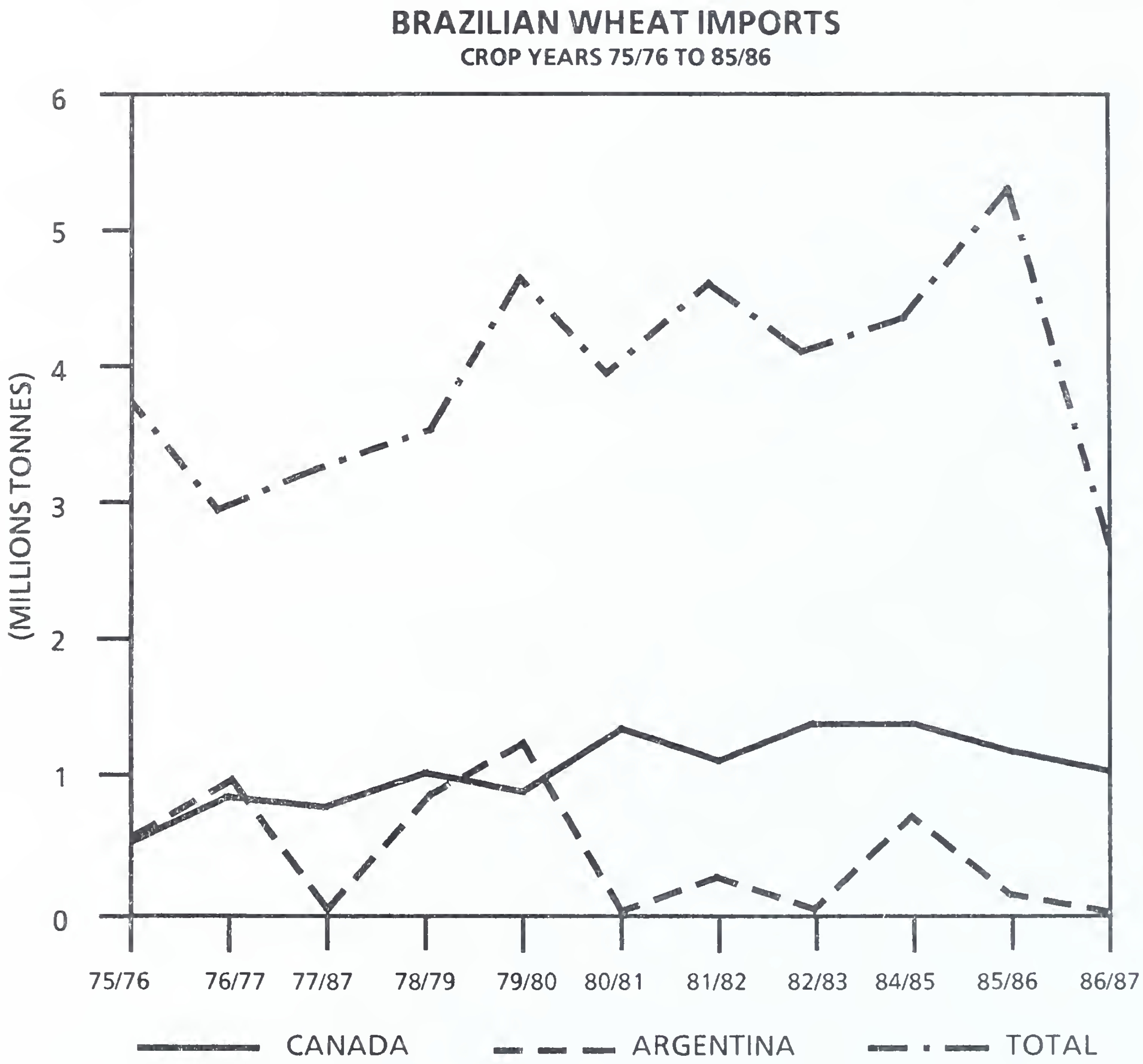

Graph shows the sporadic nature of Argentine sales of wheat to Brazil. The 1984/85 and 1985/86 values for Argentina are preliminary. Source: Statistics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, IWC World Wheat Stats.

(Cont'd)

Canada should try a new trade angle (cont'd)

Former attempts at establishing a free trade area in South American have failed, but new economic conditions as well as more flexible administrations may be the catalyst needed to establish such an entity, says Schissel.

In the event of such an accord, Canada could face increased competition in the South Amercian market, a market which has significant potential for growth.

"Over the past decade, Brazil has consistently imported Canadian wheat to the point where she now vies with Japan as our third largest customer of wheat," says the statistician. U.S.S.R. is the primary buyer of Canadian wheat followed by the China.

"Argentina at times has also exported large quantities of wheat to her neighbor but historically, political and technical considerations have made these transfers quite sporadic. (See attached graph.)

"With a workable accord in place, Brazil and Argentina could find it mutually advantageous to establish trade mechanisms which facilitate exchanges of goods and services rather than expending foreign currency for the purchase of agricultural commodities."

Schissel says many countries represent potential markets for Canadian agricultural commodities but they don't necessarily have the cash on hand to buy goods. He says it may be a good time for Canada to look at a barter or exchange-type system in dealing with these countries.

"It may be an opportune time for Canada to investigate countertrade mechanisms with not only Brazil, but other middle-income developing nations as well, especially those with debt-loads that prevent them from using large amounts of foreign currency for food purchases.

"If the past is any indication, a South American accord may be years away. However, now may be the time to reassess trade relationships with purchasers of our agricultural commodities and to take steps to recognize and accommodate the needs of these countries," he says.

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November 17, 1986
For immediate release

Good response to moisture management conference

The advance registration for the Moisture Management in Crop Production Conference scheduled for Calgary, November 18 to 20 has surpassed 100.

According to organizers the response has been positive to date from a cross section of the prairie agricultural community.

"The 20 speakers have provided abstracts and papers covering their presentations, indicating a real willingness to participate in such an important area as managing moisture in the production of crops in the prairies," says David Nielsen, a member of the conference organizing committee with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

It was earlier estimated the conference would attract between 150 and 200 participants, including producers, researchers and other industry representatives.

The registration cost is $85 for the two-day event, with the daily rate of $40. The full registration fee covers two noon luncheons, the banquet, a copy of the proceedings and admission to all the presentations.

For further information on the conference, contact David Neilson at 422-4385 in Edmonton, John Calpas at 381-5145 in Lethbridge, or Russ Lewis at 297-5952 in Calgary.

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November 17, 1986
For immediate release

Dairy processing specialist for Lethbridge

Claude Baker has been appointed as dairy processing specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge.

In an announcement by Ken Waldon, head of the department's dairy processing branch, Baker will be responsible for dairy manufacturing plants and dairy products in Alberta Agriculture's Region 1, which is an area which roughly lies south of Brooks, Vulcan and Nanton and runs to the Montana. border.

Baker graduated in 1976 from the University of Manitoba with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture, specializing in food science. Since graduating, Baker has taken specialized dairy courses from the University of Manitoba.

During his university years and after graduation, he worked for Silverwood Dairies Limited in Winnipeg in processing and quality control. He worked initially in the fluid milk department and was later in charge of the ice cream department.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Following are three articles entitled "Estate Planning Course Available", "Planning To Die", "No Price Tag On The Family Unit", which are basically introductory stories for a new course available to farmers from Alberta Agriculture on estate planning.

The fall and winter is the best time for farmers to be looking at these home study courses. We will appreciate what ever space you can give to one or all of these articles, now and over the next few weeks, in helping to make farmers aware of the information available.

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November 17, 1986
For immediate release

Estate planning course available

A new home study course is available from Alberta Agriculture which will help farm families tackle the complex and sometimes uncomfortable issue of farm estate planning.

Divided into eight categories "Farm Estate Planning, A Family Affair", is a self-guided course, says Pat Davidson, co-ordinator of the program in Edmonton. There are no tests to write. The farm family can work through the different sections at their own speed and follow up with what ever action is needed.

"The information we provide isn't a do-it-yourself estate planning guide," says Davidson, "But it does get people thinking about what is required to have their financial affairs in order."

The course material was prepared under the direction of Alberta Agriculture professionals ranging from family resource management specialists, to a farm tax specialist and an agricultural lawyer.

It covers issues from the basics of why estate planning is necessary, to retirement, financial planning, investments, income tax and property transfers, business arrangements and wills.

It may look heady but it is written in simple terms and a home video is also available to help illustrate the message.

"It must be remembered there are eight sections in this course, but depending on how complicated a person's business arrangements are, perhaps not all sections apply to every farm family," says Davidson. "People should review the course carefully and for further advice contact their nearest district agriculturist, district home economist, lawyer or accountant."

The course material, which comes in a three-ring binder, costs $30 and contains invaluable information on estate planning. Also included in the package is a separate publication called "Tax Management Strategies for Alberta Farmers". The accompanying video costs $7.

(Cont'd)

Estate planning course available (cont'd)

Along with the written material, Davidson says the department's specialists and field staff will be providing more than 50 seminars across the province, from now until April, discussing farm estate planning. The seminars are an opportunity to ask questions. At some sessions, time has been provided for private consultation, by appointment, with the department lawyers.

For details on the seminars contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

For more information on the estate planning home study course, or a registration form, contact a district agriculturist or home economist or Davidson at the Alberta Agriculture Home Study Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or phone 427-2404.

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November 17, 1986
For immediate release

Planning to die

It's a sad legacy if the last thing a farmer does in life is leave his family with the legal nightmare of trying to sort out an estate that hasn't been properly planned.

At best its going to cost them a lot of time, frustration and money to get it all ironed out. At the worst it could force them to lose everything the farmer has worked for during his life and it could destroy the family unit.

These are sobering messages but they are the reality of what can happen when a farmer dies without doing proper estate planning, says an expert with Alberta Agriculture.

And a simple will in itself isn't enough to handle the sometimes complicated disposition of assets and transfer of property to family members.

That's why Colin Simmons, an agricultural lawyer with the department in Edmonton, is a major supporter of a new home study course now available from the department called "Farm Estate Planning, A Family Affair".

"The course itself isn't intended to show someone how to do the actual estate planning," he says. "But it covers in good detail and in plain English the sort of things a farmer has to think about in estate planning.

"And we're not just talking about someone who is 70 or 80 years old and they decide it's time to write a few things down. I'm talking about young farmers and their young families. As soon as someone has some assets or a family they should be thinking about estate planning.

"It's an ongoing and changing procedure which may even cost several hundred dollars in professional services, but I guarantee them that investment in planning will save them many, many thousands of dollars and save the family a great deal of grief later on."

(Cont'd)

In an eight-part discussion the Farm Estate Planning home study course looks at planning for retirement, financial planning, investment basics, income tax and property transfer, farm business arrangements, estate planning considerations and wills.

It costs $30. A video is also available for another $7 which helps give a visual message on the value of the whole procedure.

"There are just so many horror stories out there about people who didn't do any planning and they maybe didn't even leave a will," says Simmons. "The father dies. There is a dispute among the children on who should get what. They end up with nothing. The father and husband is gone, the family members hate each other and they have to sell the farm to pay the legal bills. It sounds extreme, but it happens again and again. And it can happen to families who have always been happy and harmonious."

Simmons says the home study course isn't a veiled attempt to drum up business for accountants and lawyers who provide the estate planning services.

He says from the legal side of things lawyers will make far more money from the months and years of work involved in trying to settle an unplanned estate than they will from helping a farm family, for a few hours, plan its affairs properly.

The course in itself will save the farm family money by having them sit down at home to answer many of the questions and make decisions before they meet with professionals to work out the details.

Registration forms for the home study course are available from any Alberta Agriculture district office. For more information contact a district agriculturist, district home economist or Pat Davidson, home study program co-ordinator, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

November 17, 1986

For immediate release

No price tag on the family unit

If you think the cost of living is high, just think about the cost of dying without a will or a properly planned estate.

While the farmer may be knocking on heaven's door, his family may be going through hell trying to sort out business affairs which threaten to not only cost them thousands of dollars but could destroy the family unit.

"I've had widows who have come to me for advice a few months after their husbands have died and they don't care about money any more," says Colin Simmons, a lawyer with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton. "They are just worried about what's happening to their family unit. There was no proper planning of their husband's estate. The family members have been arguing about how the estate should be split and the children end up hating each other.

"It's a sad situation. Either no one thought about estate planning or they didn't want to talk about it while dad was alive. But now that he's gone it has to be dealt with and unfortunately the whole mess could end up destroying the family."

There can't be any price tag put on the value of proper estate planning says the agricultural lawyer, who is a major supporter of a new home study course produced by Alberta Agriculture, called Farm Estate Planning, A Family Affair.

The eight-part course, which costs $30, represents a considerable savings in itself as families are encouraged to make decisions at home before they consult professional services.

But the substantial value comes from the motivation created by course in getting farmers to do something about their estates, before they die or retire.

"And calling farm estate planning a family affair is really an excellent title," says Simmons. "Estate planning does involve the whole family."

(Cont'd)

No price tag on the family unit (cont'd)

The lawyer says even people who do give some forethought to how their estate should be divided will run into problems if they don't make those decisions as a family.

Simmons says often there is a situation where the farmer has grown children and two or three of them have moved away and one has stayed home to run the farm.

"When he sits down to think about dividing the estate he decides that since Jack is running the farm the others aren't interested. And he'll make a whole set of decisions based on what he assumes," says Simmons. "But after he dies perhaps those decisions are the last thing that his family wants and then the squabble begins."

The agricultural lawyers says the best plan is to sit down as a family and make decisions. There are many questions as the home study course points out that need to be answered by the family.

"If Jack is going to keep the farm then perhaps there has to be a cash settlement made with the other children. Those are the sorts of things that are better settled in advance, in the privacy and comfort of the farm home, as opposed to a yelling match in a lawyer's office or courtroom at some point down the road."

For more information or a registration form for the home study course contact any Alberta Agriculture district office, or Pat Davidson, Home Study Program Co-ordinator, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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AGRI-NEWS

November 24, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Search for the perfect gift ends....................................1
Poinsettias signal Christmas season...............................4
Young farmers can see the world...................................5
New market gardeners examine the industry.........................8
Time to think about 1987 greenhouse crop..........................9
Instructor named for southern Alberta.............................11
Northern Alberta instructor appointed.............................12
December 31 is inventory day......................................13
Editor's Note...15
Setting a course through farm planning............................16
Developing a farm plan..19
Coming Agricultural Events..22

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

November 24, 1986

For immediate release

Search for the perfect gift ends

If you have a farmer on your Christmas list and you don't know what to buy, consider giving a gift of knowledge and information.

For about $30 you can bring to the comfort of his home office the latest professional and technical advice available on any one of a dozen topics involving agriculture.

The gift is one or more of the Alberta Agriculture home study courses which cover subjects from crop protection to farm estate planning. Each course comes in a three-ring binder packaged in an easy-to-wrap box.

The courses, usually split into eight chapters, are geared to lead a farmer or the farm family through the particular subject, step-by-step. Written in understandable terms, the information was prepared under the direction of the department's professional and technical staff.

Because there is no deadline to complete the program, all course participants can work at their own pace. Most chapters have a quiz at the end to help in reviewing the information and some have an optional final exam that can be written to obtain a certificate.

Pat Davidson, co-ordinator of the home study program with the department in Edmonton, says winter is usually a good time to start a course because the pace around many farming operations has slowed.

Among the courses offered through the home study program is Crop Protection. This course ties the control practices of weeds, insects diseases and problem wildlife together. For the first time the full range of crop pests is studied in an integrated on-farm approach. This course has eight chapters, comes with other relevant publications and a kit to help recognize pest problems at home. It costs $30.

(Cont'd)

The Alberta Animal Health Course teaches general health principles and outlines problems that may affect your particular animal species. The course explains how to combat diseases which slow growth rates, reduce fertility, lower production and can cause death. There is an introductory five-part lesson which talks about animals in general and for the $30 fee the participant can also select information on two specific classes of animals such as beef, dairy, swine, horses, sheep, goats or poultry.

The Alberta Forage Course allows the farmer to study at home and learn how to solve forage production problems. The information shows how forage crops can increase farm profits. The eight lessons present, in clear, non-technical language, the necessary principles for understanding forage production. Cost is $30.

The Alberta Weed Control Course leads the participant step-by-step through the principles and problems of weed control. At the end of this course the farmer will be able to develop a weed control program for his farm. It is divided into eight chapters and costs $30.

The Alberta Irrigation Management Course explains in six chapters how to develop irrigation systems, manage your system for a profit and solve irrigation problems. Cost is $30.

The Alberta Cattle Nutrition Course will answer any questions a farmer might have about supplying cattle with complete and balanced rations. The course will help to isolate cattle nutrition problem areas and show how they can be corrected. It covers both beef and dairy cattle nutrition. This $30 course is divided into eight chapters.

The Alberta Soils Course discusses all aspects of soil from soil properties and formation, to soil testing, salinity problems, acid soils, soil conservation and tillage methods. This course includes 10 chapters and costs $30.

Farm Home Planning Course is actually two separate courses depending on needs. One option discusses all aspects of building a new home through planning and construction, while the other option talks about home remodelling. The cost is $30 each.

(Cont'd)

Search for the perfect gift ends (cont'd)

The Alberta Farm Computer Course is designed to prepare producers for the future. It is aimed at acquainting farmers with computers and will give a good introduction to their application on the farm. No previous computer experience is required and a farmer does not need to have a computer to take the course. It covers eight chapters and costs $25.

The Alberta Dairy Production Course can be useful for either the established or beginning dairy farmer. This 10-part course covers all aspects of the dairy operation from quality milk production to dairy marketing. It costs $30.

The Alberta Pork Production Course deals with the latest developments in profitable pork production. It will help producers reduce baby pig mortality, increase litter size and number, boost average daily gain, provide for better feed conversion efficiency and increase carcass quality. It is split into seven chapters and costs $30.

And the newest course available from Alberta Agriculture is Farm Estate Planning. This comprehensive eight-chapter program points out the need for and steps to be taken in planning your estate. It deals with everything from retirement to investments, property transfers, farm business arrangements and wills. It also costs $30.

For more information or to order one of the home study courses contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or The Home Study Program, 2nd Floor, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113th Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Pat Davidson
427-2404

November 24, 1986
For immediate release

Poinsettias signal Christmas season

Consumers buying good healthy looking Poinsettias, should have an attractive flowering plant in their homes through to Christmas and even longer, says a greenhouse specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

The traditional Christmas flowers are appearing earlier in stores and greenhouses, but that should not affect their ability to stay attractive through the holiday season, says Mirza Mohyuddin, a specialist with the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

Mohyuddin says because of the earlier warm weather, it has been a good year for growing poinsettias for Alberta greenhouse operators.

The plants started appearing in stores in early November.

"Consumers are buying in November because they are getting excited about the season," he says. "Even though it is early the plants should add color to the home even after Christmas."

Mohyuddin has advice for people planning to buy poinsettias. He says first look for good quality plants raised in Alberta because they are acclimatized to conditions here and will last longer than plants brought in from other provinces or the United States.

Specifically assessing the plants, he says pick a plant with brackets (those red leaves) that are just about the same size as the green leaves. Select a plant that has dark green leaves, as opposed to something that looks pale. Finally he says check the flower at the centre of the plant.

"I'm not talking about the big red leaves, but right in the centre of the plant there should be a flower. If it is healthy and fresh looking then the plant will last. If the flower is wilty or mouldy then the plant will not last as long."

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Contact: Mirza Mohyuddin
973-3351

November 24, 1986
For immediate release

Young farmers can see the world

If you're young, have some farming background and don't have to be any place special in the next year or so, here's a chance to see the world.

Sounds like a sales pitch from someone selling snake oil, but acutally it's the basic ingredients for young Alberta farmers interested in an international agricultural exchange program.

If you can meet a few basic requirements and raise enough money to cover what will probably be the least expensive adventure of your life, the International Agricultural Exchange Association (IAEA) would like to hear from you.

The non-profit association was founded in 1963 to provide young men and women between 19 and 28 an opportunity to learn how the rest of the world farms. Participants can work in the areas of agriculture, horticulture or home management and get paid for their efforts too.

You can travel to any of 11 countries around the world and stay anywhere from four to 13 months with a host farm family working on their farm, learning their customs and culture.

"It's an excellent opportunity for anyone who wants to experience other parts of the world, " says Gitte Eyres of Australia, a former trainee herself who recently made a promotional tour of Western Canada.

"There are no gimmicks or catches. Participants or trainees essentially need to pay their transporation costs at the start and the association takes care of the rest. Trainees are placed in safe, compatible homes and farms and the rest is just a great experience."

Eyres is originally from Denmark and participated in the IAEA program in 1981 as an Around the World trainee. She worked as a home management trainee first in New Zealand for six months and then for six months on a farm near Unity, Saskatchewan. During her stay in Canada she met her Australian husband who was also participating in the program. She now lives on a sheep farm in Broomehill in the South West of Western Australia.

(Cont'd)

During part of her promotional tour through Alberta she was accompanied by Judy Yaremcio of Vegreville a former trainee who visited Australia and Switzerland and Gary Taylor of Victoria, Australia, a trainee spending seven months with Limestone Lake Apairies near Lamont.

Along with trying to interest young Albertans to participate in the program, the association is also hoping to establish more host families in the province to accomodate trainees from other countries.

Besides the age limitations, trainees must have some practical farming experience, be single and in good health, be adaptable, have a desire to travel, and be able to spare four to 13 months away from home.

Countries participating in the program as hosts include Australia, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden the United Kingdom and the United States. Seven other countries participate by sending out trainees but they do not have their own host families established yet.

The maximum cost per trainee is about $6,000, but it is money well spent says former Vegreville trainee Yaremcio, who participated in the program in 1983/84.

"To a young person it sounds like a fortune," she says. "But really it's probably about the cheapest adventure of your life. You pay it at the outset and you are well looked after from that point on.

"When I was a trainee to Austrailia and then Switzerland I had first class airfare and accommodations with stopovers in Singapore, Bangkok, Hawaii and Fiji. They looked after all ground transportation, got me to and from airports and made sure things were working out well between me and the family.

"And on top of it you are paid an allowance for your work which is probably equivalent to minimum wage. Also during the program you have from three to eight weeks holidays in which to travel and get to know the country and its people better. It was probably one of the greatest years of my life."

(Cont'd)

Young farmers can see the world (cont'd)

Under the program the trainees can select the length of program, the one or two countries they would like to visit and the type of farming operation they would like to work with.

The association handles the match up, makes all the arrangements, provides each trainee with an orientation program and makes periodic checks on the trainee and family to make sure everything is going well. If there is some kind of problem where the two don't click, a different host family will be found.

For further information on the program as either a trainee or as a host family contact the IAEA office at 1211 - 11 Avenue S.W., Calgary Alberta, T3C 0M5 or call 244-1814.

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Contact: I.A.E.A.
244-1814

November 24, 1986
For immediate release

New market gardeners examine industry

Newcomers to market gardening will be able to learn the industry from the ground up at a two-day conference planned for Red Deer in January.

The January 20 and 21 meeting will cover production, marketing and planning says Phil Dixon, vegetable specialist with the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

"The conference is designed for people who are just starting out or have been in the business for two or three years," says Dixon. "It's geared for commercial growers and not for home gardeners."

A viable market garden in Alberta should be at least 15 to 20 acres in size. Marketing essentially involves the technique of selling products either at the farm gate, through a farmers' market or to a wholesaler.

"This conference is geared to be a practical discussion of the structure of the market garden industry," says Dixon. "It will explain to people the type of planning that has to be done and show them the avenues open to sell their products. The conference will cover a great deal of valuable information and strategies."

Registration is now available at $50 for each farm member and $25 for each additional representative from the same operation.

For further information on the conference or to register contact Dixon at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre at R.R. #6, Edmonton, Alberta T5B 4K3 or phone 973-3351.

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Contact: Phil Dixon
973-3351

November 24, 1986
For immediate release

Time to think about 1987 greenhouse crop

Although vegetable production around most commercial greenhouses is over or nearing an end for this year, it's not too early to make preparations for next year's crop.

A greenhouse specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, says the end of the growing season is a good time to apply sanitation techniques in the greenhouse to eliminate or reduce, insect, disease and weed problems.

Mirza Mohyuddin, a greenhouse specialist with the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre says seedless cucumber crops are nearly finished and there should be some Alberta greenhouse tomatoes until Christmas. But beyond that, the facilities will be fairly quiet until the 1987 season begins.

Mohyuddin says the end of the season is a good time to deal with insects. White flies can be easily controlled if the heat is turned off and the crop is frozen for two to three days.

By contrast, cold temperatures won't kill Thrips, another problem insect.

"To control Thrips the greenhouse should be heated until all the eggs have hatched and then the building should be treated with a recommended spray to kill the insects," says the specialist.

It is also a good time to apply weed control measures. He says once the crop is off, but with the greenhouse warm and weeds still growing, operators can apply suitable herbicides.

Late fall is also a good time to steam or sterilize the soil in the greenhouse.

"Steaming the soil is still one of the most popular methods of sanitizing," he says. "The operators should be careful to do a thorough job and make sure the steam gets into all nooks and corners in the greenhouse."

(Cont'd)

Time to think about 1987 greenhouse crop (cont'd)

Mohyuddin says if steaming isn't possible, chemicals can be used to sterilize or pasturize the soil. He notes, however, when using chemicals the greenhouse must be kept heated. If the chemical is applied and the soil cools, chemical residue can be trapped in the soil and will still be present when the new crop is planted.

In preparing for next year's crop the specialist says most greenhouse operators should have already ordered their materials, had the growing medium analyzed and readied trays for planting.

One of the most important factors with young seedlings in winter is to keep the temperature of the growing medium at 26 or 27 Celsius, says Moyhuddin.

Once the plants have germinated the temperature should be dropped slowly to allow the plants to "harden off" and prevent them from becoming weak and lanky seedlings.

For more details on sanitizing the greenhouse contact Mohyuddin at the tree nursery at 973-3351.

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Contact: Mirza Mohyuddin
973-3351

November 24, 1986
For immediate release

Instructor named for southern Alberta

A computer specialist who has been with Alberta Agriculture for the past two years will be back on the road again this winter providing instruction to farmers in southern Alberta.

Mark Olson, who has been with the Computer on Wheels program since it began in 1985 will be travelling to many centres in southern Alberta providing the popular computer course to farm operators.

His recent appointment was announced by J. Wilson Loree, project manager and head of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

Computer on Wheels is a joint venture of IBM Canada, the University of Alberta and Alberta Agriculture. It provides farmers with basic information about how computers can be used in farm management.

Olson, who obtained a bachelor of science degree, majoring in computer science from the University of Calgary, in 1984, assisted with the development of the materials used in the program.

He was born and raised on the family farm near Cremona.

Prior to the Computer on Wheels program he served for two summers as research assistant with the farm business management branch in Olds. He also wrote two publications, How to Select Farm Acounting Software For Your Computer and How to Select Physical Record Keeping Software for Your Microcomputer.

Olson has often made contributions to a monthly computer newsletter, call Compu-Farm.

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Contact: J. Wilson Loree
556-4213

November 24, 1986

Northern Alberta instructor appointed

A native of London, England who has had extensive experience as an educator and computer instructor will be working with northern Alberta farmers this winter teaching a mobile farm computer program.

Graham Rosher, who was raised in Croydon, a suburb of London, has been hired to provide the Computer on Wheels program to farm operators.

His appointment was announced by J. Wilson Loree, project chairman and head of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

Computer on Wheels is a program funded jointly by IBM Canada, the Univeristy of Alberta and Alberta Agriculture providing basic information to farmers on how computers can be used in farm management.

Rosher who attended both the University of London and the University of Alberta, has a bachelor of science and a master of education degree.

Prior to accepting the Computer on Wheels post, Rosher was an instructor for two years with the Alberta Vocational Centre at Grouard in the Peace Region, working on the CompuVan Project. This was a project of Alberta Advanced Education designed to provide courses in computer literacy and computer applications to residents of northwest Alberta.

Earlier he taught junior and senior high school for 13 years. He further developed his computer skills while working for ACCESS Alberta, the Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology at Drumheller and in computer retail sales.

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Contact: Wilson Loree
556-4213

November 24, 1986
For immediate release

December 31 is inventory day

Taking farm inventory on New Year's Eve may not be your first choice for celebrating the start of a new year, but you'll be able to go the party knowning you've taken a big step in measuring 1986 earnings.

Doug Barlund, a farm management economist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds says an acurrately tallied farm inventory is a vital tool in determining how your financial year went.

"People wonder why take inventory?" says Barlund. "But an inventory, or detailed list of all assets you possess, is helpful in two major ways. First it is needed for developing your year-end balance sheet and secondly it's needed for calculating your net farm operating income or profit."

Net farm operating income is calculated by subtracting gross farm operating expenses from gross farm operating revenue. In other words, deducting all costs of operating the business this year from this year's operating revenue.

In order to solve this equation on the expense side, it is essential to know beginning and ending year values of supplies inventory and accounts payable. On the revenue side of the equation, it is essential to know beginning and ending year values of all crops and livestock and accounts receivable.

"Without these inventory values, it is impossible to accurately determine net farm operating income, or the profit you have generated as a result of operating the farm business this year," says Barlund.

"If you are in the habit of developing a complete balance sheet (list of all assets and liabilities) at the end of each calendar year, you will already have the inventory values necessary to determine your net farm operating income."

(Cont'd)

December 31 is inventory day (cont'd)

For help in starting an inventory, Alberta Agriculture offers the Farm Financial Fitness package - worksheets that can be used to evaluate the business now and monitor its progress in the future.

Copies of the Farm Financial Fitness package are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

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Contact: Douglas Barlund
556-4245

EDITOR'S NOTE

Following is a two part feature on farm planning prepared by Craig Edwards, with the farm business management branch in Olds. The first part, called "Setting the Course Through Farm Planning", is intended as an overview of the value of planning. The second part, "Developing A Farm Plan" is an example of what a farm plan should include.

The stories have no time element and can run together or independently.

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November 24, 1986
For immediate release

Setting a course through farm planning

Running a farm without some kind of planning is like trying to dance in snowshoes.

It lacks style, requires extra work and no one, including yourself, is sure of the next step.

Planning often seems to be one of those abstract terms that falls into that nice-but-not-necessary category.

But for a farmer, planning is just as vital as knowing how grain grows or how to put pounds on a calf, says Craig Edwards a farm business management economist with Alberta Agriculture.

"Farm planning involves setting goals and then developing a plan or plans to achieve the goals," says Edwards, who works at the farm business management branch in Olds.

"Most farmers and members of farm families have a plan or plans of some kind, even though they don't write their plans on paper. If they didn't have a plan of some kind, they wouldn't accomplish much in achieving goals. With a lot of random stop-and-go decisions, the farming operations would be less productive."

Although there are many plans created and existing in farmers' minds, they are far more useful when written on paper. Farmers and family, partners and others concerned with the operation then have an opportunity to understand and contribute to the planning procedure.

"A written plan is an outline or sketch of the organization of the available resources and their use in the future," says the economist. "It can be very simple and even skimpy or ideally, it could be detailed enough to include operating costs and returns for each enterprise on the farm. Developed further into a whole farm budget, the resulting plan could be used as a map for the organization and operation of the farm resources, physical and financial."

(Cont'd)

Edwards says there are a few steps to follow when preparing a short term plan.

1. Define goals of those who are affected by the planning, such as the farm owners and families.
2. Make an inventory of available resources and their limitations. Include land, buildings, labor, machinery, capital for operating and investment, and an estimate of credit available.
3. Identify possible enterprises that may help to maximize profits (assumed goal of manager). Don't ignore possibilities because you haven't considered them in the past. Consider marketing plans as well as production and financial plans.
4. Estimate gross margins or the expected income above variable costs for each enterprise at the different levels of expected production from using different input levels. Maximize returns by applying the principle of equal marginal returns to your final choice of enterprises. The basic decisions are what to produce, how to produce and how much to produce.
5. Identify the most limiting resource and select those enterprises with the largest gross margin per unit of this resource.

Regardless of whether you're involved in hogs, cattle, grain, chickens or whatever, you can develop a plan to estimate the possible return expected.

"Returns over variable costs or gross margins can be estimated for each enterprise or each crop being considered in your farm planning," says Edwards. "Using a separate worksheet for each estimate is very useful for showing the details of all input costs. These estimates can be used later to get total input costs for the farm as well as physical totals for all inputs required.

"Total gross margins for all your enterprises will show your expectations of how much money you will have to pay for fixed expenses for the whole farm.

(Cont'd)

Setting the course through farm planning (cont'd)

"The accuracy of your projections for the whole farm depends on your ability to make accurate predictions for each enterprise. In turn, that depends on your knowledge of expected past yields and prices of your produce and ability to project into the future."

A farmer who uses the right amount of inputs to produce at maximum returns for each choice of enterprise will do much better than one who doesn't. Applying the principle of equal marginal returns to maximize returns from each enterprise is the most important management activity a manager can perform.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

November 24, 1986
For immediate release

Developing a farm plan

While there is a lot of talk about planning, some farmers may find it difficult to know were to start in preparing or writing their first farm plan.

Craig Edwards, a farm management economist with Alberta Agriculture has developed a simple model which shows the type of information required for a basic plan.

"The procedure for planning can be learned by working through this simple example," says Edwards.

1. Farm goal - to achieve the highest profits possible with the limited resources.

2. Resource inventory

Cropland	- 600 acres
Tame pasture	- 200 acres
Native pasture	- 300 acres

Buildings - hay shed and cattle shed and corrals

Labor	- 2000 hours
Capital	- $50,000 of expected cash income and up to $180,000 of credit to pay expenses and purchase cattle
Machinery	- adequate

3. Possible enterprises

The farmer wants to grow canola, barley and wheat. He restricts the acreage of canola to one-third of his crop acres so he seeds it on the same land only once every three years.

(Cont'd)

He wants to look at the possibility of buying 100 beef cows to raise calves to sell in the fall, instead of keeping 200 stocker steers and heifers for five months as he has been doing. He wants to seed about 100 acres of barley so he has straw and bedding and some grain for the cows if he chooses them.

4. Estimate gross margins

After budgeting for each cropping enterprise, he estimates the gross margins per acre for each crop at his expected yields and prices.

GROSS MARGIN PER ACRE

CROP	(Bushels) Yield	Price per Bushel ($)	Total Revenue ($)	Variable Costs ($)	Gross Margin ($)
CANOLA	25	6	150	85	65
WHEAT	35	3.50	122	78	44
BARLEY	50	2	120	80	40

GROSS MARGIN PER HEAD

CATTLE		INCOME	VAR. COSTS	GROSS MARGIN	TOTAL G.M.*
Beef cows	100	400	200	200	20,000
Stocker	200	800	680	120	24,000

(* Total gross margin)

5. Select those enterprises with the largest gross margin

Crops

Canola has the highest estimated gross margin at $65 per acre, so the best economic choice is to seed canola on as many acres as possible. Since this crop is limited to 200 acres, that's all that can be seeded to canola.

His next choice is for wheat with $44 per acre gross margin and he chooses to seed 300 acres of wheat, leaving 100 acres to seed to barley which has a gross margin of $40 per acre.

(Cont'd)

Developing a farm plan (cont'd)

Livestock

Next he has to look at choosing between 100 beef cows or 200 head of stocker steers. He budgets them at $200 gross margin per cow and $120 per head for the stocker steers for a total gross margin of $20,000 for the cows and $24,000 for the stockers.

He then decides to buy the stocker steers instead of beef cows.

Because he does not need 100 acres of barley for the beef cows, he can seed 400 acres of wheat instead of 300 acres.

His completed plan would include:

Crops	Acres	Gross margin per acre	Total gross margin
Canola	200	$ 65	13,000
Wheat	400	$ 44	17,600
		Total:	30,600
Livestock			
*stockers (200)			24,000
		Total gross margin:	$ 54,600

*Note: variable expenses of $136,000 include repayment of purchase price of stockers and interest paid.

The total gross margin of $54,600 is expected to be available to pay unallocated fixed costs including debt servicing, utilities and administration costs, family living allowances, taxes, insurance and so on.

The whole farm plan should represent the best allocation of the resources available to achieve the goal of maximizing profits. The planning procedure is more important than the plan itself, which should be flexible to allow for changes as better information is considered.

For further information on farm planning contact Craig Edwards at the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, or call 556-4248.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

Coming Agricultural Events

1986

Canadian Dehy Conference
Travelodge Hotel,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan............................November 24, 25, 26
Bruce Hobin, - 306-966-5551

Annual meeting of the Christian Farmers Federation
Nisku Inn
Nisku, Alberta...November 27
Ted Koopmans - 428-6981

Alberta Cattle Commission, Annual General Meeting
Marlborough Hotel
Calgary, Alberta...................................December 1 - 3
Joanne Lemke - 403 -291-4800

1987

Canadian Alfalfa Seed School
Fantasyland Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta.......................................January 11 - 13
Eleanor Simpson - 377-2341

Alberta Alfalfa Seed Producers Annual Meeting
Fantasyland Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta...January 14
Eleanor Simpson - 377-2341

Unifarm Annual Convention
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton, Alberta...................................January 12 - 15
Willow Webb - 451-5912

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association
15th General Meeting and Convention
Marlborough Inn
Calgary, Alberta..January 16 - 17
Don Saynor, Calgary - 250-2509

Alberta Horse Breeders Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta.......................................January 16 - 18
Donna Cunningham - 291-4596

Alberta Dairymens Association
79th Provincial Dairy Convention and 66th Annual Meeting
Marlborough Hotel
Calgary, Alberta..February 2, 3, 4
Bette Paterson - 453-5942

What's In Stock For You? (Beef Seminar)
Travelodge Hotel
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan...................................February 3, 4, 5
Al Hingston - 306-787-4694

(Cont'd)

Coming events (cont'd)

Western Canadian Conference on the Food Industry
Sheraton Cavalier
Calgary, Alberta.....................................February 9 - 10
John Melicher - 403-451-5959

Alberta Beef Symposium
Convention Inn
Edmonton, Alberta....................................February 10 - 11
Don Milligan - 948-5101

Prairie Potato Council
Landmark Inn
Regina, Saskatchewan.................................February 16 - 18
Harry Meyers - 306-867-9233

Western Canadian Society for Horticulture
Landmark Inn
Regina, Saskatchewan.................................February 18 - 20
William Kalyn - 306-522-3661

Western Barley Growers Association
Annual meeting and convention
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta....................................February 25 - 26
Linda Lukenbill - 403 - 291-3630

Accent '87
Market Outlook for Grains and Oilseeds
Convention Inn South
Edmonton, Alberta.......................................March 10 - 11
Sharon Abbott - 427-5393

Women of Unifarm
Red Deer, Alberta.......................................March 17 - 18
Williow Webb - 451-5912

Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit
(MATFP) Conference
Banff Centre
Banff, Alberta.......................................March 29 - April 1
Gerd Andres, Olds - 556-4240

Alberta Womens Week
Olds College
Olds, Alberta...July 20 - 23
Kathy Lowther - 485-2236

(Cont'd)

Coming Agricultural Events

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in January, February and March 1987, or any events omitted in the attached list?

2. What are the dates? Please be sure to state whether 1986 or 1987.

3. Where are they being held? Please state the hotel if known.

4. Please be sure to state the name, address and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by December 31, 1986 to:

Print Media Branch
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events are published four times a year in Agri-News.
The next edition will be January 5, 1987.)

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AGRI-NEWS

December 1, 1986

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For immediate release

This Week

Impact of gas emissions on livestock unknown 1
Fingers crossed for 1987..4
Farmers have to plan for drought....................................6
Innovative machinery helps conserve soil moisture....................8
Alberta beef enters Hong Kong market..................................10
Don't overlook Alberta's vegetables..................................11
Donation made to 4-H program...14
New alfalfa variety soon available...................................16
Farm women encouraged to get involved.................................18
Alberta products to be promoted in Hong Kong.........................20
A special French Canadian treat for the holidays.....................21

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Impact of gas emissions on livestock unknown

It could cost up to $5 million in research work to find out whether normal gas emissions from the petro-chemical industry are adversely affecting the health of Alberta livestock.

An Edmonton workshop on the topic has suggested more study is necessary to establish that health problems in livestock are caused by emissions created by normal operation of the industry.

There is scientific evidence that higher exposure levels from accidental releases such as sour gas well blowouts can have some adverse effect on livestock.

Dr. Byron Beck, head of Alberta Agriculture's toxicology lab and workshop chairman says, from an objective viewpoint, before anyone can start pointing fingers there has to be solid evidence that emissions do cause problems.

He says the workshop has established the priority problems that need to be addressed through research. A report containing that list will be presented to senior levels of the provincial government to be considered in future plans.

One general conclusion among delegates was simply that not enough is known about the whole issue of gas emissions and livestock health. The workshop estimated it would cost between $2 and $5 million to undertake a comprehensive study.

The workshop, the first of its kind in Alberta, brought together government and industry representatives, environmentalists, regulatory agencies and farmers to discuss in a rational way what information is known about the effect of acid forming emissions.

Beck says while sour gas well blowouts, such as recent mishaps at Lodgepole and Claresholm, and routine emissions from gas and oil processing plants are the main concern, gasses can come from many sources.

(Cont d)

"If you look at the whole situation of acid gasses there are many sources which could be a problem," he says. "Automobiles produce gas emissions and any type of coal-fired furnace can produce acid emissions, too. We even have gasses that drift into Alberta from as far away as California."

While sulphur dioxide (acid rain) and hydrogen sulphide are prominent contaminants which receive attention there are "numerous" other acid components which need to be studied as well, he says.

The workshop reviewed both the long and short term livestock health problems observed by farmers. This included short term exposure during well blowouts and long term exposure associated with sour gas plant operations. It also included exposure to sulphur blocks and exposure during gas plant operation upsets.

The complaints ranged from production loss, to a decrease in calf weaning weights, abortions, fertility problems and respiratory problems.

"There was also a review of the obvious affects observed by veterinarians and other members of the scientific community during their investigations, including such things as respiratory problems, runny eyes and runny noses," says Beck.

The workshop also reviewed research information and available literature and heard about the U.S. situation concerning the issue. Beck noted that Alberta has a reputation for maintaining the highest standards of environmental protection in North America.

"In short we were trying to present as much information as possible and increase our knowledge about the problem," says Beck.

In smaller working groups, participants priorized what they considered the problems needing to be addressed.

"The majority made it clear if there are suspected livestock health problems then we have to get evidence to prove the point one way or the other," says Beck. "And the only way to do that is through research to develop better diagnostic capability."

The workshop chairman says it will be a difficult job for researchers to complete this type of study. A similar project in southern Alberta which tried to determine if there were any human health problems related to living near sourgas plants at Twin Butte cost $3.7 million.

In that instance researchers were dealing with subjects which were co-operative and could communicate fully, whereas an animal study depends on human observation of animal problems.

The workshop report is expected to be the framework for future research projects.

The department specialist says workshop participants were pleased with the conduct of the two-day meeting.

"The Energy Resources Conservation Board, which sets the environmental standards for industry operation in the province, was pleased to hear the concerns and learn what others feel are the problems that need to be addressed," says Beck. "And industry was glad to see the workshop wasn't just a two-day industry-bashing session. They appreciated the responsible and rational discussion of the problem."

Farmers also expressed their support for the workshop saying it focused attention on many of their concerns and established a foundation for further work.

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Contact: Dr. Byron Beck
436-8410

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Fingers crossed for 1987

Although farmers cursed the persistent September rains which delayed harvest, that ground moisture will be a major boost for next year's crop production, says a weather researcher with Agriculture Canada.

Dr. Barry Grace says the moisture that was locked in by November's frost could be the only sure thing as far as predicting the success of the 1987 crop year.

Grace, an agrometeorologist with the Lethbridge Research Station says accurate long-term weather forecasts are not available, but looking at all the indicators, "the potential for good crops in 1987 appears excellent".

He says reports indicate the grasshopper infestation may be decreased slightly next year as well.

Grace made his comments as part of a review of the effect weather has had in recent years on agriculture. He was among several noted speakers who took to the podium during the recent two-day Western Provincial Conference discussing moisture management and drought.

The research scientist says the September rainfall represented well above average precipitation for much of the southern prairies. For example, southern Alberta and Saskatchewan recorded rainfall of 250 to 650 per cent of normal.

"This rainfall replenished the depleted soil moisture reserves," said Grace. "Much of this moisture was locked into the soil with the freezing temperatures of November and is the basis for soil moisture reserves for spring planting in 1987. With adequate spring and summer precipitation the potential for good crops appears excellent.

"The 1987 forecast indicates that the area infested by grasshopppers has decreased slightly. But the potential still exists for serious infestations for many locations in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1987."

(Cont'd)

Looking at the history of drought and its impact on agriculture, the agrometeorologist says long-term weather forecasts are unreliable because of the many variables.

Drought conditions occur when weather systems deviate from their usual flow patterns but no-one is really sure what causes these changes. Grace said unusual sea-surface temperatures and continental snow-cover conditions may have a role in changing weather patterns.

"Accurate short-term forecasts (a few hours, days) are commonplace today," he said. "However, long-term forecasting (months and years) of phenomena such as a drought for a given location is still unreliable.

"While some researchers have found evidence of an approximately 20 year drought cycle on the prairies, over 90 per cent of the total variation in precipitation from year to year cannot be accounted for by this cycle. Indeed, the occurrence of any cycle in past weather is no guarantee that it will continue in the future."

He said one of the main points in assessing the impact of drought on crops is the timing of the rainfall.

Crop failures may occur during one year and not in another even though both years have the total precipitation.

"Timing of precipitation events and their effects on soil moisture are the critical elements in assessing drought."

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Contact: David Neilson
422-4385
Dr. Barry Grace
327-4561

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Farmers have to plan for drought

Prairie farmers can't accept the inevitability of drought with the same complacency as death and taxes, says a grain farmer from Manitoba.

While there is nothing a person can do to prevent drought from striking they can manage their operations to try and minimize the impact of dry weather.

James Nielsen a farmer from Goodlands, Manitoba told the recent Western Provincial Conference on moisture management that government also has to increase its commitment to drought research and increase farmer awareness of moisture management techniques.

"Drought has to be a factor in the farm management decision making process," said Nielsen. "It affects crop selection, weed control practices, the amount of fertilizer applied, the number of tillage operations and more.

"Over the past 20 years the introduction of improved technologies such as larger and more modern machinery, selective weed control chemicals and increased use of fertilizers has converted this '1930s drought bowl' from a land where one-third to one-half the area was summerfallowed to an area where successful continuous cropping practices prevail. This transition has been very beneficial from both a farmer and soil conservation point of view."

But, Nielsen said continuous cropping practices require higher capital investment, greater input costs and more management skills.

"The system works well when it rains, however, when drought occurrs, especially for more than one year, it will take its toll on those farmers who do not maximize production under the drought circumstance. A number of my neighbors are no longer farming for this reason."

(Cont'd)

Farmers have to plan for drought (cont'd)

He said drought not only plays a major role in the business of farming but also has major implications for the entire rural community.

"Only someone who has watched his or her crop dry up, and burn up, can appreciate the real stress which drought can place on an individual, the family and the community," he said.

Nielsen called on all levels of government to assume a greater responsibility in finding improved methods to drought management.

"Federal, provincial and municipal governments have a role to play in drought management by providing the long and short run focus on practical research in several areas..." said the farmer.

"The agricultural professionals working in government and industry are quite competent, they do their job and useful information is available, however, budgets are simply inadequate, therefore, services are not keeping pace with changing technology.

"Proper funding of innovative research, demonstration and testing is necessary if western Canadian agriculture is to remain efficient and competitive in world agriculture.

"An overall policy toward the continued development of farming systems which will more adequately cope with drought would be both profitable for the farmer and would achieve many of the conservation goals which are receiving priority in today's agricultural environment."

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Contact: David Neilson
422-4385

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Innovative machinery helps conserve soil and moisture

There may not be a stampede to buy conservation-type farm machinery, but industry spokesmen say that side of the business is enjoying more attention these days than conventional style implements.

And depending on how the farm economy fares there is the potential for an increasing line of new machinery which could help improve farm profits while protecting soil and ground moisture.

Spokesmen for Versatile Noble Cultivators, of Nobleford Alberta say it is very competitive in the industry right now with companies trying to improve the type of machinery available for soil and water conservation practices.

Richard Albut, general manager and Simon Hann, research and development manager, say farmers are becoming more aware of the benefits of conservation farming and moisture management and are tailoring any new purchases of farm machinery in that direction. They made their comments at the recent Western Provincial Conference.

"Manufacturers view conservation tillage and moisture management as areas for development in the future," says Albut. "The rate at which new and better equipment will enter the marketplace will depend on the ability of farmers to make a profit and invest in new equipment, and thus give manufacturers confidence to spend money on developing the equipment to do the job more effectively."

As an example of the competitiveness Albut says that in 1981 there were 29 models of heavy duty, high clearance minimum/no till seed drills in the market place and by 1985 there were 99 models.

Hann says in all areas of crop production there is room or there are attempts to develop new lines of equipment to meet specific conservation needs.

(Cont'd)

Innovative machinery helps conserve soil and moisture (cont'd)

In the harvesting operation one of the main problems is getting the swath of straw or trash evenly distributed back over the field. While there are straw choppers which Hann says do a "pretty fair job", it would be better to develop a combine with direct cut headers where all the threshing and separating is done along the full width of the header.

"The crop comes in the front of the header and trash is ejected straight out the back. Only clean grain would be conveyed laterally to a central hopper."

In discussing seedbed preparation the research and development manager says the rodweeder is still one of the best pieces of equipment available, although a couple companies have developed a heavier more durable design which can work in firmer ground and rocky conditions.

"Future tillage implements should be designed to work shallower and with more consistency in terms of depth control to better control weeds without drying out the soil and without incorporating too much surface residue."

Looking at the primary tillage operation, Versatile Noble itself is trying to develop a "compromise between the blade and chisel plow" to come up with a tillage tool that will work shallower than a wide blade and retain more surface residue than a chisel plow.

In the seeding end of things, work is ongoing to develop improved seed drills that can both apply fertilizer and seed in one operation.

Improving trash clearance with hoe and shovel type seeders is a high priority to handle the heavy trash conditions encountered in minimum or no-till seedings, says Hann.

"There is some interesting work being done in the area of moisturizing seed prior to planting," he says. "This technology may help to minimize the risks of seeding in drought conditions."

The company spokesmen say it is important for government agenices like the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Agency to continue its conservation demonstrations. They also feel the government could keep industry informed of its conservation research.

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Contact: David Neilson
422-4385

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta beef enters Hong Kong Market

A Calgary packing company, aided by the provincial government, has just completed the first major sale of Alberta beef to Hong Kong.

Centennial Packers Ltd. will be shipping about $1 million worth of meat to the Asian country over the next eight months, breaking ground in a market that has been largely dominated by United States suppliers.

David Wong, Alberta Agriculture's trade director for The People's Republic of China/Hong Kong says hopefully the deal will be a "real breakthrough in the sale of high quality Alberta beef to this large market."

The sale which represents about 160 tonnes of a variety of meat cuts, was made by Centennial Packers to Dah Chong Hong, a diversified international trading company.

The sale was negotiated through a joint effort involving Centennial representatives Gorham Hussey and Ray Fielding of Calgary, Wong with the department's market development division in Edmonton and Jack Kennedy, agent general with the Alberta/Hong Kong office in Hong Kong.

The department trade director says the sale reflects a growing interest in the quality of Alberta food products.

"In one sense our meat is slightly more expensive than the U.S. beef, but the quality is more appealing. Our meat is much leaner and represents less waste. They realize they are getting better value for their money."

Wong says the people of Hong Kong are adapting a more Western style of living and are becoming more health conscious of the foods they eat. He hopes the introduction of Alberta beef, along with other trade initiatives, will help to motivate more sales of agricultural commodities to that country.

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Contact: David Wong
427-4241

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Don't overlook Alberta's vegetables

Alberta's vegetable growers need a bigger bullhorn to let the world know that much of the broccoli, cauliflower and other fresh produce found in grocery stores is grown in good old Alberta soil.

It's a matter of creating awareness from the consumer, right on up the ladder, that Alberta isn't just a bread basket, it's a darn good vegetable crisper too.

That's the message from the chairman of the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board (AFVMB), recently back from a tour of the vegetable industry in Quebec.

While Alberta growers don't have a potential 40 million people to feed like their counterparts in central Canada, the progress of the Quebec industry is a good beacon for producers here, says Bruce Johnson, a broccoli grower from Taber.

"Certainly we are not the size of the Quebec industry, but there are two or three key areas that hold us back and unfortunately they tend to involve money," he says. "We can grow vegetables as well as any one else, but it's from the harvesting point onwards that we run into trouble."

Johnson says a big area of concern is consumer awareness and promotion of the Alberta vegetable industry.

"Most Alberta consumers are use to hearing about 'California No. 1', but how many realize that a lot of the vegetables they see in the store is locally grown Alberta produce.

"We've even had disagreements during our in-store promotions with some consumers telling us that we can't grow this or that in Alberta."

Although Alberta's vegetable industry doesn't produce the staggering volumes that Quebec does, Johnson says it has the potential to capture a lot more space in the average grocery cart.

(Cont'd)

Along with the promotion aspect, Johnson says the industry needs support to increase its handling and storage capabilities.

"From a horticultural or production point of view we're equal," he says. "But when you look at some of the harvesting machinery and storage facilities available we can see where changes are needed."

Alberta's vegetables growers are limited to a short season, as far as sales are concerned, simply because they don't have the ability to store vegetables.

"Really by about January vegetable growers in Alberta are finished," says Johnson. "In Quebec where they have controlled atmosphere storage they are able to sell vegetables 11 months of year. But we're looking at a huge investment to build that kind of facility."

Johnson says the labor involved in harvesting crops here is also a drawback.

The Quebec tour involved a delegation from the fresh vegetable marketing board, Phil Dixon, Alberta Agriculture's northern vegetable specialist and Susan Kitchen associate marketing director - Alberta with Alberta Agriculture. They were hosted by Quebec's ministry of agriculture.

Alberta has 132 commercial vegetable growers from the Montana border north to the Peace River region. Collectively they farm about 2,800 acres and sell about $5 million worth of vegetables a year at the wholesale level. These producers are separate from the market gardeners who sell vegetables at the farm gate or at farmers' markets.

Sharon Chmielewski, manager of the AFVMB in Lethbridge says seeing a vital Quebec industry brought home the fact the objectives of Alberta's vegetable growers are not unrealistic.

"Alberta has the potential to grow 20,000 acres of vegetables," she says. "We have the population and the market area to support that type of production. It is inspiring to see what a difference storage and handling facilities can make."

(Cont'd)

Chmielewski says although there is no detailed time frame, the long term objective is for the province to become seasonally self-sufficient in crops such as brocolli and cauliflower, and perhaps self-sufficient in storage-type crops such as cabbage and carrots.

Phil Dixon says although it's impressive that Quebec producers grow 70,000 acres of vegetables a year, their success is relative to Alberta.

"Ten years ago the Quebec industry was much like ours is today," he says. "Small scale and struggling to gain ground. But within 600 miles of Montreal there is something like 40 million people. It is a tremendous market. And their industry has received tremendous support from the government to get rolling."

Dixon says because Alberta's industry is on a smaller scale it is not feasable for each producer to own up-to-date harvesting and post-harvesting handling equipment, but it might be possible for farmers to form small co-ops to own a pool of specialized machinery.

It is important to the future of the industry to acquire modern handling and processing equipment so it can expand and improve the line of products sold to wholesalers. Cold storage facilities are also vital to the industry's growth.

"It was an excellent tour from all points of view," he says. "It certainly shows us where our industry is headed."

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Contact: Bruce Johnson
223-3702
Phil Dixon
973-3351

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Donation made to 4-H program

The Alberta 4-H program has received a $9,600 boost from a provincial foundation to further develop environmental education materials for 4-H members.

Sherry Roth accepts a $9,600 cheque from John Thorpe to be used by the 4-H program to develop environmental education material.

The Alberta Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation has authorized the grant to the 4-H program to assist with the completion of phases two and three of the 4-H environmental appreciation manuals.

The cheque was presented to Sherry Roth, the 1986 Premier's Award winner, by John Thorpe, director of the foundation at the recent Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference in Calgary. Roth accepted the cheque on behalf of 4-H members in the province.

The Environmental Appreciation Program was designed to make use of the unique environmental characteristics found at the Alberta 4-H Centre at Battle Lake, west of Wetaskiwin.

(Cont'd)

The program consists of 12 manuals that will assist staff in introducing environmental appreciation to 4-H campers and other groups using the centre. Three of the manuals have already been completed.

The educational program was established to provide participants an opportunity to gain awareness of environmental principles in general and the Battle Lake environment specifically.

It is intended the programs will instill in participants a sense of responsibility toward the environment. Although developed for Battle Lake it is hoped they can be adapted for use around the province.

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Contact: Ted Youck
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December 1, 1986
For immediate release

New alfalfa variety soon available

A new variety of alfalfa which shows strong resistance to one of the most devastating crop diseases will soon be available to forage producers.

Barrier alfalfa, which was developed by the Agriculture Canada research station at Lethbridge is the first alfalfa variety developed in Canada that is resistant to the disease known as verticillium wilt.

Western Canadian seed growers are expected to have the first commercial quantities of Barrier seed available for producers by 1988.

"The new variety is the result of a breeding program that started at Lethbridge in 1977 in response to the threat of verticillium wilt," says Dr. M.R. Hanna, alfalfa breeder at the research station.

"This disease had only just been detected in North America, although it had been causing severe damange for many years in several European countries."

By 1978, verticillium wilt had been found in British Columbia and by 1980 it was identified in irrigated alfalfa stands in southern Alberta.

Surveys conducted in Alberta in recent years have shown the disease is most severe in the Lethbridge-Taber area, where it has been found in 25 per cent of the surveyed fields.

Verticillium wilt has been even more damaging in parts of southern British Columbia, such as the Creston area.

"The high level of the disease resistance in Barrier should enable the productive life of alfalfa stands in these regions to be extended by several years," says Hanna.

Alfalfa varieties with resistance to verticillium wilt have been available for some years in Europe. About 20 resistant varieties have also been developed in the United States within the past five years and many of these are now being grown in Canada.

(Cont'd)

"However, Barrier has consistently shown a higher level of resistance to verticillium wilt than the European or U.S. varieites," says Hanna. "It also has excellent resistance to bacterial wilt and has produced good forage and seed yields in field trials across Canada."

About 370 kilograms of breeder and foundation seed of Barrier was released to seed growers in western Canada in 1986 by SeCan Association. This initial distribution of seed will ensure adequate seed supplies will be made available to forage producers as quickly as possible, says Hanna.

It is expected the first quantities of certified seed for general use by farmers will be available in the spring of 1988.

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Contact: Dr. M.R. Hanna
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December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Farm women encouraged to get involved

Farm women need to become more involved, not only in their own affairs at home, but with events beyond the farm gate.

That was the message sent home with the 250 delegates attending the recent Farm Women's Conference in the Peace River region.

Linda Hueppelsheuser, a farm wife from Blackfalds, north of Red Deer, told the ninth annual conference that because the farm wife is an equal partner in the farm she must take an active role in its operation and be aware of national and international events that have an impact on agriculture.

"The day is gone when a farm wife just has to run the household and look after children," said Hueppelsheuser who has been married for 20 years and helps her husband Dennis operate a 5,000 acre dryland grain farm. "Farm women need to be aware and knowledgeable not only of what goes on in the home, but in their own farming business and in the world."

She said the household role is fine if that is what a woman really wants but a farm wife does have a choice.

"Farm women have a right to be involved in the business and they should fight for that," she said. "There are still some men who believe all women have between their ears is air."

Along with her work at home, Hueppelsheuser, is an active member of a federal sectoral advisory committee which provides advice from the farmer's point of view to the Canada/U.S. trade negotiators.

She has a private pilot licence, is active in the Flying Farmers organization, is vice chairman of the local agricultural manpower board which advises the farm labor pool and is serving as a member of the Alberta Department of Advanced Education Advisory Council.

She lead the closing session of the two-day conference at the Grande Prairie Motor Inn.

(Cont'd)

Farm women encouraged to get involved (cont'd)

Many of her views were shared earlier in the program by a three-member panel who also told farm women to get involved in organizations.

Barbara Klimchuk, president of Women of Unifarm, Kathryn Habberfield, president of the Alberta Women's Institute and Jean Leahy, region 8 co-ordinator for the National Farmers Union discussed why it is important for farm women to become involved with some organization. The three panelist are also all members of the Women of the World organization.

They encouraged delegates to establish goals and do some planning to help them reach those objectives.

Therese Beaudoin, Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Falher described the conference as a "tremendous success".

"The 250 registrants who came from across the Peace region braved bad weather and cold temperatures to get here," said Beaudoin. "That shows a tremendous committment on their part. And the conference itself was just excellent."

Liz Delahey, women's editor of The Western Producer gave the keynote address and Alberta's Associate Minister of Agriculture, Shirley Cripps, was guest speaker at an evening banquet.

"Both Liz Delahey and Mrs. Cripps gave interesting and dynamic talks," said Beaudoin.

She made special mention of the Riverside Ladies Aid from Beaverlodge for their help in event.

"When the delegates arrived in that cold weather the ladies aid was there with coffee and muffins and it was really appreciated," said Beaudoin. "They also catered to the coffee breaks during both days and did an excellent job."

This was the largest women's conference sponsored by Alberta Agriculture in the Peace region. This year's event was organized by a committee chaired by Norma Edwards, district home economist in Grande Prairie.

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Contact: Therese Beaudoin
837-2211

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta products to be promoted in Hong Kong

Producers of Alberta food and beverage products will have an opporunity to promote their goods across the Pacific next spring at a major Canadian food show in Hong Kong.

At least seven Alberta companies have already made the comittment to participate in Food and Beverage Canada 87, running from March 18 to 20 in Hong Kong.

David Wong, Alberta Agriculture's trade director for the People's Republic of China/Hong Kong says any Alberta companies interested in the show should contact him for more information.

The show is part of Canada's biggest marketing effort to increase its share of Hong Kong's $1.7 billion food and beverage market. Co-ordinated through the Commission for Canada in Hong Kong, the effort will involve a series of consumer and trade promotional activities.

The trade show is being organized by the federal government in co-operation with the provinces.

"Alberta companies participating in the show will be increasing the awareness of the quality and competitiveness of their food and beverage products among the key players involved in Hong Kong's distribution system including importers, wholesalers, grocery retailers, hotels, restaurants, institutions and consumers," says Wong.

"The show will be an opportunity to introduce Alberta suppliers to the various Hong Kong buyers in order to generate sales."

Details for arranging participation in the show are being handled by Garnet Richens, with the Pacific trade development divison of the Department of External Affairs, in Ottawa.

For more details on the trade show contact David Wong in Edmonton at 427-4241.

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Contact: David Wong
427-4241

December 1, 1986
For immediate release

A special French Canadian treat for the holidays

The holiday season hostess looking for something special for family or friends, can borrow from Canada's dual-cultural heritage this year and serve a traditional French Canadian dish.

It takes some time to prepare, but the Tourtiere or traditional French Canadian meat pie is an elegant and economical entree, says a provincial food and nutrition specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Aileen Whitmore, says the Tourtiere can be the main dish at a neighborhood supper party during the holiday season, or it can be served in the tradition of the Christmas Eve meal for the family.

"It is really a very special dish at this time of year," says Whitmore who herself has prepared Tourtiere for family and friends over the years. "It's not difficult to make, but it can be time consuming."

Whitmore says it's the type of main dish that can easily be prepared ahead of time and frozen. She suggests making it with a friend or another member of the family, because the help will be appreciated.

Tourtiere is based on three main meats, combined with other ingredients and baked in a double pastry shell. Whitmore's recipe makes five or six nine-inch pies at a time. Allow about three hours to prepare. She says if a neighbor is helping or if you're preparing the meat pie for a large crowd, the recipe can be easily doubled or tripled to meet needs.

The recipe calls for pork, beef and chicken which is cubed or chopped rather than ground. She says she has found the best cuts to use are a fresh pork ham, or leg of pork; beef from the round and any cut of chicken.

While the meat component may seem expensive, Whitmore says it is quite economical considering the number of servings. She estimates the meat costs about $1 per serving.

(Cont'd)

A special French Canadian treat for the holidays (cont'd)

When making Tourtiere ahead of time, she says the uncooked pies can be frozen for several months. If the pie is baked first it should be stored frozen no longer than a few weeks before being used.

Tourtiere should be served with vegetable and salad and goes well with a favorite relish or chutney as an accompaniment.

"It's a great meal idea for this time of year," says the specialist. "It is a special dish. It tastes great. It has a real Canadian origin and it can be made with nutritious Alberta products. What more could a hostess ask for?"

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Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

(Following is Aileen Whitmore's recipe for Tourtiere)

TOURTIERE

3 kg	boneless meat with fat removed (approximately 2 kg pork, 500 g beef, 500 g chicken)	6 pounds
25 mL	fat 2 tablespoons	
2	medium onions, finely chopped	2
250 mL	bread crumbs 1 cup	
15 mL	allspice	1 tablespoon
15 mL	savory	1 tablespoon
5 mL	salt	1 teaspoon
1 mL	pepper	1/4 teaspoon
Dash	chili powder	1/8 teaspoon
Dash	poultry seasoning	1/8 teaspoon
	Pastry for 5 23 cm (9 inch) double crust pies	

Cut meat in bite-size cubes, removing all fat. Brown meat in fat. Add onions, bread crumbs and seasonings. Cover with hot water and simmer, uncovered, 3 h. Cool and skim off fat. Drain off water and adjust seasoning. Place in unbaked pie shells and top with crust. Cut circular vent in top crust to allow steam to escape. Bake at 180°C (350°F) until crust is golden. Or freeze pies and bake later at 180°C (350°F) 1 h or until filling bubbles.

Makes about five 23 cm (9 inch) pies.

AGRI-NEWS

December 8, 1986

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For immediate release

This Week

Alberta breaks into Thailand market....................................1
Dr. Art Olson accepts federal appointment............................3
New co-ordinator for farm conference.................................5
Conference looks at the "people" side of farming....................6
Houseplants may need winterizing.....................................8
Canola growers plan January meeting..................................9
Editor's Note...10
In search of maximum economic yield Part 1...........................11
Part 2...........................14

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta breaks into Thailand market

Two Alberta companies have just completed a sale of cattle genetics to the Kingdom of Thailand, signaling a major breakthrough in the budding trade relationship with the southeast Asian country.

Although the dollar value of the sale of beef and dairy semen to Thailand in itself is not significant, it is a good indicator of what could lie ahead, says the trade director for Alberta Agriculture.

"The value of these sales is relatively small, but subsequent sales are being discussed and are expected to be larger," says Bill Anderson, with the market development branch in Edmonton.

"Thailand has not really been aware of what Alberta has to offer. We have put on an extra effort this year and this sale of cattle genetics is certainly a foot in the door for a whole range of trade opportunities."

Agriculture has been the main stay industry for Thailand, a country of 50 million people. It was at one time the leading exporter of rice in the world and it has a large grain industry as well.

"The dairy and beef industry in Thailand is developing and expanding," says Anderson. "Farmers have had to diversify from grain because of the glut on the world market. They are now turning to cattle."

The Dairy Promotion Organization of Thailand (DPO) has launched a major campaign to stimulate consumption of milk to improve the health and diet of the Thai people.

To meet the production increases the country is searching for improved lines of cattle breeds.

In September the Alberta Agriculture market development division hosted a group of Thailand buyers in Alberta, giving them a first hand look at livestock and products available from the province.

(Cont'd)

That was followed by a visit by Anderson to Thailand in the past month to meet Thai officials and look at their agricultural industry.

"That effort resulted in two private Alberta companies completing sales of semen," he says. "One company made a sale of beef semen, while the other company actually made two separate sales of dairy cattle semen.

"I am pleased with how quickly these sales have developed. There is a strong potential for ongoing business between these companies and buyers in Thailand."

"Now is an exceptionally good time for Alberta companies to get into these markets because of the interest in cattle in Thailand."

There is also a deal pending between Thai and Alberta interests on the sale of race horses to that foreign country.

The trade director says the potential for the sale of a wide range of Alberta products in Thailand is excellent. With a large domestic population, along with about three million tourists annually from around the world, the southeast Asian country is a prime market area.

Anderson also expects an exhange agreement known as the Canada/Thailand Agro-Industrial Exchange Program will open opportuntities for Alberta's industry. The program is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

"I expect several Alberta companies will participate in that program," says Anderson. "It will involve representatives from several companies here visiting Thailand in pursuit of long term business collaborations and arrangements with their Thai business partners."

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Contact: Bill Anderson
427-4241

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

Dr. Art Olson accepts federal appointment

A leading figure on the agricultural scene in Alberta for nearly two decades will be leaving his provincial post this month to accept a new challenge with the federal government.

Dr. Art Olson, assistant deputy minister (ADM) with Alberta Agriculture and a key member of the department for 17 years, has been appointed an assistant deputy minister with Agriculture Canada in Ottawa.

Olson, 44, will be leaving his Edmonton post as ADM of research and resource development, to act as ADM of the federal department's research branch.

In his new job, which becomes effective January 1, 1987 Olson will be responsible for all the federal agriculture research stations in Canada including the research institutes based in Ottawa.

He becomes the 15th person to hold or share the leadership of the Agriculture Canada research arm in its 100-year history. He replaces Dr. E.J. LeRoux who is on pre-retirement leave.

"This opportunity presents a real challenge to me," says Olson, a native of southern Alberta. "It will give me a chance to be more closely involved with many of the people who I have worked with over the years.

"I am impressed with the group of people who make up Agriculture Canada's research branch. It has been important in the past for Canada to use its agricultural technology to maintain our competitive position in the world. Without doubt that will be even more important in the future."

Olson, who was born and raised on a farm near Taber, obtained his doctorate in 1967 from the University of Alberta in plant biochemistry and studied molecular biology in his post-graduate training.

(Cont'd)

He was a research scientist with Atomic Energy of Canada in Chalk River, Ontario before joining Alberta Agriculture in 1970 as head of the Alberta Horticultural Research Centre at Brooks. He was later director of the department's plant industry division and latterly was the ADM, research and resource development.

According to Jean-Jacques Noreau, Agriculture Canada's deputy minister, Olson was chosen after a months-long search, both inside and outside the federal government.

"We have chosen who we believe to be the best qualified person available to lead Agriculture Canada's science program in support of the agri-food industry," says Noreau.

Along with Olson's appointment, the federal department also announced that Dr. Ian de la Roche will be second in command to the new ADM. de la Roche takes on the newly created post of director general, priorities and strategies, for the research branch. A genetics specialist and native of Montreal, he comes to his new job from his post as director of the plant research centre in Ottawa.

"I am pleased to be assisted by Dr. de la Roche," says Olson. "He is aggressive and bright and has great ability. It will be his job to help map the long term direction of the branch."

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Contact: Dr. Y. Teklemariam
427-1956

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

New co-ordinator for farm conference

A native of the Olds area with a background in education and business has accepted a position as co-ordinator of the provincial Managing Agricultural Techonology for Profit conference.

Anita Lunden, will assist Alberta Agriculture farm business management branch economist Gerd Andres in organizing the popular event which marks its 10th anniversary in March.

The appointment was announced by branch head, Wilson Loree.

For the past nine years, James Obniawka has accepted the regular six-month challenge of preparing for the conference held in Banff each spring.

Obniawka opted this year to remain on the family farm near Sexsmith to help out while his father is recovering from an illness.

Lunden was born and raised on her family's mixed farm near Olds. She attended Red Deer Junior College and University of Calgary obtaining a bachelor of education degree. Specializing in English and social studies, she taught school for several years.

Lunden also spent eight years as a business person in Chetwynd, B.C., becoming very active with the chamber of commerce and merchants' association. Working through these groups she helped plan and present trade shows, seminars and events to promote local business. She also helped develop campaigns to attract industry and investment to the area.

As conference co-ordinator she will attend to all conference details including arranging for speakers, sponsorship and facility negotiations, making travel arrangements, planning menus, rounding up audio-visual equipment, promoting the conference and taking registrations.

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Contact: Anita Lunden
556-4276

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

Conference looks at the "people" side of farming

Farmers and ranchers may be able to get a better understanding of themselves and the management of their own operation at a well-respected conference in Banff next spring.

Now into its 10th year the Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference will focus on three key areas as it makes its presentation to farmers and their families, in March.

People, Planning and Profit is the theme of the 1987 conference at the Banff Centre. A farm wife and human resources consultant from Iowa, Jolene Brown, will give the opening talk "The Human Side of Farming".

Brown, who has addressed many farm groups, will be making the point that while farmers may know "the weeds, seeds, feeds, breeds, etc." side of the business they also have a self-image - a human side - that needs attention.

Sponsored by the Alberta Agriculture farm business management branch in Olds, the conference will run from March 29 to April 1.

Working with conference organizer Gerd Andres, a farm management economist with the branch, is conference co-ordinator, Anita Lunden.

"This is an important conference for all farm managers and their families," says Andres. "Speakers from across the continent will present new and practical ideas on production and business management as well as emphasizing the point that farmers are people too."

Along with listening there is an opportunity to discuss, question, and evaluate these ideas in regular and bearpit sessions.

"People who have attended the conference in the past have had a great deal of praise for the value of being able to meet and exchange ideas with other farm families from across the province," says Andres.

(Cont'd)

Conference looks at the "people" side of farming (cont'd)

There will be a wide range of topics offered during the conference. Topics will range from the more technical issues such as marketing, business analysis, policy issues, legal issues and cash flow management to more human subjects such as successful negotiating and parenting. Participants will be able to attend sessions of most interest to them.

Registration is $100 per couple and $75 for a single. Registration forms will be available in early January.

For further information on the conference contact Andres or Lunden at 556-4240.

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Contact: Anita Lunden
556-4240

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

Houseplants may need winterizing

While winter often comes as a shock to people it can also have an impact on the average houseplant which usually goes through changes too.

If the plants look good and seem to be doing okay with normal care there is really no need to change your approach, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

But Marilyn Dykstra, with the Alberta Horticultural Research Center, in Brooks says there are a few points in houseplant care to be watchful of in winter.

"In general, most plants go through a cycle of actively growing and rest," she says. "Usually this rest period occurs in winter.

"Because many plants are naturally slowing down this time of year you can cut back on the amount of water and fertilizer being applied."

With fewer hours of sunlight and less energy in the sunlight we do receive, she says plants that require a great deal of light may need to be moved to a brighter location.

She also suggests if the home furnace isn't equipped with a humidifier it may be useful to place a pan of water in the room with plants to increase the humidity.

"Putting out a pan of water is better than misting the plants which only has short term value," she says.

Plants should not be placed in drafty areas. They should be kept back from windows and away from doors and not placed too close to hot air registers.

Dykstra cautions certain plant varieties may require individual attention.

"If a person has a specific concern or if they see a plant starting to decline they should consult their local greenhouse operator or a specialist with Alberta Agriculture for advice."

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Contact: Marilyn Dykstra
362-3391

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

Canola growers plan January meeting

Topics, from an assessment of the 1986 crop year to the long term impact of a Canada/U.S. trade agreement, will be on the agenda in January as Alberta canola producers meet in Edmonton.

Marcel Maisonneuve, president of the 1,200 member Alberta Canola Growers' Association says several issues will be covered at the two day annual convention, January 28 to 30 at the Edmonton Inn.

Agenda items include a presentation on the free-trade negotiations and results of the Grow With Canola program. Guest speakers during the convention are Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga and former federal minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Otto Lang, who is now vice-president of Pioneer Grain.

Maisonneuve says the convention will provide delegates a good opportunity to be updated on industry activities.

A farmer at McLennan, Alberta, the association president says although the 1986 harvest started out poorly, because of bad weather, it appears seed quality was relatively good.

He said early frost was a major contributor to an increase in the amount of #2 seed this year.

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Contact: Marcel Maisonneuve
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Editor's Note

Attached is a two-part story prepared by special crop specialists Blair Roth in Lethbridge dealing with getting improved yield from soft white wheat under irrigation.

Part 1 is basically an introduction to the work Alberta Agriculture has been doing in studying yield, while Part 2 shows in more detail what that field work has proven so far.

Both articles refer to different management levels being used in growing these crops. To further explain these levels of management see Attachment #1.

While this feature talks about Intensive Crop Management (ICM) in southern Alberta it would have general interest across the province since ICM is discussed in all regions. The stories are written to run together or independently.

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

In search of maximum economic yield
Part 1

Specialists with Alberta Agriculture are trying to find that happy medium that would allow farmers to get the greatest yield from their irrigated soft wheat crop with the least amount of input costs.

Somewhere between the extremes of ignoring the crop after throwing the seed in the ground and doing everything short of sleeping in the field, there lies a level of management which should give the farmer improved yield at a reasonable cost or maximum economic yield (MEY), says Blair Roth, special crop specialist with the department in Lethbridge.

Roth says a farmer can put very little into the crop and get a low yield. Conversely he can put all kinds of money and time into maximum seeding rates, maximum fertilizer application, applying plant growth regulators and all suitable fungicides to get the maximum yield.

"But maximum yield at maximum cost isn't the answer either," he says. "What we're looking for is something down the middle. Maximum economic yield, and the key word here is 'economic'."

"There haven't been enough years of testing done to come up with the averages," says Roth. "But it is known that improved management can greatly improve yield, without costing an arm and a leg."

Part of the job is to show farmers they're missing opportunities using dryland farming techniques to grow a crop under irrigation.

Roth says it is not unreasonable, through improved but realistic management to take crop yield from 65 to 70 bushels per acre to well over 150 bushels per acre.

Because of unpredictable and often uncontrollable weather and disease influences there will never be any sure-fire guarantees of a great crop every year, but maximum economic yield should become the objective.

(Cont'd)

Semi-dwarf soft white spring wheat has become an increasingly common crop in the irrigated areas of southern Alberta in the past 20 years. Today, approximately 450,000 acres of soft wheat is grown under irrigation in the province.

"During this period, the agronomic practices being used have mainly been minor modifications of production practices developed to produce cereals under the semiarid dryland conditions that exist in Western Canada," says Roth. "Practices such as wide row spacings, low seeding rates, dryland fertilizer application technology, irrigation as only a supplemental practice, and others, have all combined to ensure that soft wheat yields were unable to reach their potential maximums."

Irrigated soft wheat yields in southern Alberta over the past five years have averaged 65 to 70 bushels per acre over the 350,000 to 450,000 acres of soft wheat grown.

"Under good growing conditions and good conventional (dryland-style) management, field yields of over 100 bushels per acre have been reported by wheat growers," says Roth.

Working with that information Roth set out to determine the affect different inputs can have on production, through intensive crop management (ICM) trials.

"Under irrigation, water is another manageable input that can be controlled, to some degree, thus differentiating irrigated intensive crop management work from that conducted under rainfed conditions," says the specialist.

"The objective of the initial ICM study was to incorporate all appropriate technology available into one irrigated field scale trial to obtain an indication of the maximum yield potential for soft white spring wheat and to determine the maximum economic yield level of management."

(Cont'd)

The initial objective was achieved in 1985 with a maximum yield of 172 bushels per acre and a maximum economic yield of 156 bushels per acre (cash costs of $1.30 per bushel).

"Thus, the study provided us with sufficient data to decide to further pursue the management techniques that can assist growers to increase yields and more importantly reduce the cost of production per bushel."

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Contact: Blair Roth
381-5127

December 8, 1986
For immediate release

In search of maximum economic yield
Part 2

The 1986 growing season was a washout as far as trying to get maximum yield figures from improved crop management techniques, but to Alberta Agriculture specialists the results are important indicators of the risks farmers face.

Following a trial project in 1985 the department had set up a total of six plots in southern Alberta to see what effect different levels of management had on the yield of soft wheat grown under irrigation.

The department is hoping to define that middle ground in management called maximum economic yield, where the farmer gets the highest production from realistic input costs.

Results from 1985 had indicated a maximum economic yield of 156 bushels per acre, says Blair Roth, a special crops specialist with the department in Lethbridge. The cash costs to produce this yield was an acceptable $1.30 per bushel.

In 1986, five 30-acre sites were established through the sponsorship of the New Crop Development Fund of Agriculture Canada, Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Soft Wheat Growers Association. At these sites, three levels of management intensity were applied to the production of soft wheat to compare the yield and net return of intensive crop management (ICM) to standard production practices. (See attachment #1).

As well, the trial conducted in 1985 was repeated in 1986 investigating seeding rate/fertility interactions under intensive management conditions.

In general, soft wheat yields were much lower in 1986 than in 1985. Reasons for this decline in yield include:

1) late May-early June was very hot resulting in extremely rapid growth and stress on the plant during this important stage when the plant is developing the photosynthetic factory and embryonic head.

(Cont'd)

In search of maximum economic yield - Part 2 -(cont'd)

2) environmental conditions and many of the crop rotations being used were conducive to a high incidence of take-all root rot. Growing wheat on wheat and the excess trash from the high yielding crop of 1985 both resulted in rotation problems.

3) high incidence of stripe rust, tan spot and septoria leaf diseases resulting in very little photosynthetic area left on the flag leaf. In soft wheat, up to 70 per cent of the plant's photosynthate is manufactured by the flag leaf.

4) August was a very dry month and some soft wheat crops were under water stress late in the season.

"Overall, 1986 was a year to be forgotten in the soft wheat industry with poor prices, poor movement of grain, low yields and some of the crop caught out in the wet September weather," says Roth. "Average yields are probably running 60 to 65 bushels to the acre across southern Alberta.

"A look at the five 30-acre sites established in 1986 across southern Alberta gives us a good feel for the risks involved in using a total ICM package today."

CHART #1:

Yield Per Management Level & Associated Cost of Production/Bushel

	YIELD (bushel per acre)			CASH COSTS/$ per bushel		
SITE	I	II	III	I	II	III
A	89	100	98	2.06	2.01	2.32
B	58	56	53	3.13	3.47	4.16
C	55	55	54	2.99	3.30	3.45
D	81	93	87	2.50	2.21	2.66
E*	74	81	94	2.26	2.22	2.20

* - 30% Hail Damage

Averaging over all five locations, yields were as follows: Level I - 71 bushel per acre (bu/ac); Level II - 77 bu/ac; Level III - 77 bu/ac (no fungicide), 80 bu/ac (+Dithane - one application), 82 bu/ac (+Tilt) and 82 bu/ac (+Bayleton).

(Cont'd)

In search of maximum economic yield- Part 2 - (cont'd)

"Chart #1 underlines the management level that would return the most dollars per acre at that site," says the specialist. "Sites B and C are indicators of the risk potential involved with the program as they had a high incidence of take-all root rot and were infected by leaf diseases from an early stage of growth.

"The seeding rate/fertility trial, where 16 combinations of fertilizer and population densities were studied, indicated the high seeding rate (240 pounds per acre cross seeded - 413 plants/m^2) and 200 pounds of nitrogen applied provided the lowest cash cost of production per acre ($2.35 per bushel) in the trial in 1986 - we would call this the maximum economic yield (MEY)."

CHART #2:

The Least Cost Alternative At Each Seeding Rate:

TREATMENT				
(Seed (lb/ac))	90	150	190	240
(N applied (lb/ac))	200	200	100	200
Plants/m^2	238	273	330	413
Yield (bu/ac)	124	134	102	145
Cash Costs/Bu.	2.60	2.46	2.54	2.35

In 1985, the MEY was obtained at the 190 pound seeding rate cross seeded (392 plants/m^2) and the 85 pounds of nitrogen applied. In 1985 and 1986, residual nitrogen in the top two feet was close to 100 pounds per acre and the previous crop both years was dry peas.

"The use of narrow rows and cross seeding in soft wheat production are attempts to obtain equidistant plant stands throughout the field," says Roth. "The philosophy here is to reduce our current dependency on tillering to ensure that enough heads develop to produce a high yield. As well, the main tiller normally produces the largest head of high quality seed and this concept emphasizes the main tiller growth."

The use of unlicensed plant growth regulators such as Cycocel and Cerone have shown that they are both effective on soft white spring wheat to the point that they can be too effective if used at high rates or at the wrong stage of growth.

(Cont'd)

"Our projects in 1986 certainly demonstrated that lodging can be eliminated in soft wheat but the question now is can we do it at a rate low enough to be economic for use." says Roth. "Growth regulators will be economical on soft wheat only under very high yield conditions, and particularly with the variety Owens, which is more prone to lodging than Fielder."

In 1986, leaf and root diseases were very prominent in nearly all soft wheat fields in southern Alberta. Stripe rust, septoria, tan spot, mildew, take-all root rot and common root rot were common occurrences in this year's soft wheat crop.

The resistance of the variety "Owens" to stripe rust was very obvious and beneficial this year. This variety is susceptible to the other leaf diseases mentioned and the use of fungicides did increase yields in the intensive management program. Only in one of the five sites seeded to Owens was the fungicide-treated site more economic than the untreated check.

"Overall, some form of a modified approach to an intensive management system on soft wheat is the hope for the future," says the specialist. "These intensive management systems need to be observed over a number of environmentally different years (like 1986) to ensure these systems will be useful in the long-run and to determine the probability of failure (risk) when using one of these systems."

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Contact: Blair Roth
381-5127

ATTACHMENT #1:

MANAGEMENT LEVELS

LEVEL I

- Average grower management
- 100 lb N/acre applied
- Seeding Rate: 1½-2 bu/ac (7" rows)
- (200-300 plants/m^2)
- Variety: Fielder

LEVEL II

- 150 lb N/acre available in top 1'
- Seeding Rate: 2½ bus/ac cross seeded or 3½" rows
  (400 plants/m^2)
- Topdressed N dependent on tissue analysis
- 20" of available moisture
- Variety: Owens

LEVEL III

- Level II components
- Seeding Rate: 3 bu/ac cross seeded or 3½" rows
  (450 plants/m^2)
- Plant Growth Regulators: Cerone
  Cycocel
- Fungicides compared to Level III Check: Dithane
  Tilt
  Bayleton

CANADIANA
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AGRI-NEWS

AL.1.611

December 15, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

When the debt load gets too heavy....1
Valleyview couple win sheep award....4
Harvesting rates reflect heavy crop year....5
November temperatures just below normal....7
Trucking companies respond to survey....8
North/South reference misleading....9
Farm calendar available from DA offices....11

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 15, 1986
For immediate release

When the debt load gets too heavy

"All I need is a little more time and I'll make that payment".

That's a common and reasonable request to creditors from those farmers who are faced with a shortage of cash.

But this expression of optimism holds key insight into the financial affairs of many producers, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture. The amount of time needed may relate to the viability of the farm.

"Most producers have, sometime in their career, made payments a day late, a week late, or 30 days late," says Garth Nickorick, a farm business management economist. "Eventually the money was paid and life went on. Delays of six months or longer indicate something much more serious is affecting the farm plan."

A quick review of the following stages can be used to judge the seriousness of a delayed payment situation, he says.

"From each of the following two sections, select the statement that best reflects your situation. Pick only one statement from the operating loan section, and only one from the term loan section. Add the score from each of the sections." (Maximum 20).

1. You termed out your past operating loan within the last two years, your present operating loan is at its limit, you've been denied any further increase and your trade accounts are overdue. There is not enough inventory to pay them all off. (Score 8)

2. Within the past year you termed out your operating loan over 2 years or longer and your present operating loan is at its limit without adequate inventory to offset it completely. (Score 4)

3. The operating loan is used to its limit or the unused portion is not large enough for the upcoming expenses. There is not adequate inventory to offset it. (Score 2)

4. The operating loan balance is higher this year than last year at this time. However, you have the inventory to offset it completely. (Score 1)

(Cont'd)

Term Loans 1 to 20 years (machinery, cattle and land loans).

1. All your loan payments are 2 years or more behind and you are unable to make the next payment. (Score 12)
2. Last year's payments have not all been made and it doesn't look like you'll make the next payment on time. In addition, you may have already consolidated some loans. (Score 8)
3. Your loan payments are due, but there is not enough grain or livestock available to pay them within the next 9 months. (Score 4)
4. Loan payments are due. Grain or livestock is available but has not yet been sold. (Be sure not to double count the inventory available if it is needed for the operating loan balance). (Score 1)

"Identify your position under the operating loan and term loans. Add up your score (MAX 20)," he says. "If you score more than three out of 20, you're headed backwards. If you score more than five out of 20, you're in trouble. If you score more than 10 out of 20, drastic corrective action is needed."

Nickorick says there are only two solutions to these financial problems. Time or debt reduction. Most people opt for time because it comes in several forms - deferred loan payments, consolidation of debts, higher product prices, reduced input prices, government subsidy programs and winning a lottery.

"Requesting a loan payment extension may not fix the basic problems but will take the pressure off temporarily," says Nickorick. "Time may bring the solution but more likely it is a bomb waiting to go off unless the basic problems are solved.

The other option is debt reduction. This can be accomplished by selling something of value and paying down the loan balance. Sales may be land, livestock and/or machinery.

(Cont'd)

"Selling assets to reduce your loans is not an easy decision for a couple of reasons," says the economist. "First of all it indicates something went wrong and secondly, you are shouldering the burden of fixing it. However, debt reduction not handled properly can have serious effects on the rest of the farm."

For information on the Alberta Agriculture consulting services available to farmers, contact your local district agriculturist. Knowledgeable people with farm and financial experience to help you work through your options, are available upon request.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

December 15, 1986
For immediate release

Valleyview couple win sheep award

A Valleyview couple has been presented with an award by the Peace River Lamb Association (PRLA) marking their achievements in the industry.

Katarina Sjoquist and Jonas Ljunggren were presented with the 1986 Lynden Ward Memorial Master Shepherd Award at the annual meeting of the association, December 13 in Rycroft.

The award recognizes top management and production abilities among sheep and lamb producers.

Sjoquist and Ljunggren operate a beef and sheep farm near Valleyview.

According to Alberta Agriculture regional livestock specialist Trevor Jones, they lambed 95 ewes during a 25 day season from February 13 to March 9. Some 150 lambs were raised to market weights from 115 to 120 pounds. All lambs were marketed at Lambco, and were trucked on scheduled shipments of the PRLA from May 25 to June 15.

"Katarina has the major responsibility for the sheep, with help as needed from her husband, Jonas, and their two boys," says Jones. "Lambs are weaned early on barley rations and ewes are grazed on electric-fenced pastures. The combination of electric fences and giant Schnauzer guard dogs has kept their coyote losses down to only one lamb and two ewes during their 10 years in production."

The couple will keep the master shepherd trophy for a year and then be given a replica to keep permanently.

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Contact: Trevor Jones
835-2291

December 15, 1986
For immediate release

Harvesting rates reflect heavy crop yields

Although rates vary across the province, it will cost a farmer from $175 to $200 an hour this year to contract out the entire harvesting operation, according to a survey conducted by Alberta Agriculture.

Because of the heavy crop, both the farmer and the operator found the hourly rate a more economical way of arriving at a fee, says Garth Nickorick, with the farm business management branch in Olds.

Another familiar arrangement was to charge so much per acre for services and then add 10 or 12 cents a bushel for any production over the average.

The annual survey of custom grain harvesting rates was conducted by Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch and the farm business management branch from September through November this year. The figures have just been released.

Actual swathing and combining rates were obtained from 86 custom operators and farmers doing additional work.

The survey shows the most common swathing charges ranged from $4.50 to $5.50 per acre in the south and $4 to $5 per acre in the north. A common per hour charge for swathing is $35 to $40 per hour.

Charges for rough terrain were 20 per cent higher.

Rates for combining including operator and machine by region are as follows:

Region 1 (American Border to High River) combining charges on dryland ranged $9 to $13 per acre with the most common rate quoted being $12 to $13 per acre. Combining irrigated crops were $15 to $21 per acre.

Region 2 (High River to Olds) rates were slightly lower at $10.50 to $12 per acre.

Region 3 (Olds to Camrose) rates were $12 to $13 per acre.

Region 4 (Camrose to St. Paul and east) rates were $13 to $15 per acre.

(Cont'd)

Harvesting rates reflect heavy crop yield (cont'd)

Region 5 (Edmonton, Athabasca and west) rates were $8 to $13 per acre. The Peace River region had rates ranging from $8.50 top $12.50 per acre.

On a per hour basis the rates range from $50 to $125 per hour. The higher hourly rates reflect larger capacity machines. The most common rate is $90 to $110 per hour.

In cases where operators were hauling the grain a short distance to storage (two miles) this added $2 to $5 per acre to the charges.

"With the heavy crop in many areas this year, charging by the hour was common," says Nickorick. "This reflects a more economical means for operator and farmer to negotiate the fee. The operator doesn't have to power through the field and the farmer knows there will not be large losses thrown out in back of the combine. Another alternative for heavy crop conditions was to charge on a per acre basis with an additional fee of 10 to 12 per bushel for yields above a good average yield."

Overall harvesting charges including swathing, combining and delivery to the bin are about $23 per acre ($175-$200 per hour).

Looking back at rates charged 60 years ago, shows how times have changed says the economist.

The 1927 custom combine charge over much of the Canadian and US plains was $3 to $4 per acre with a bushel of wheat worth about $1.10. A new combine at the time was $1,500 to $4,000. The operator had to cover 1200 acres to gross the value of the combine.

In 1986 a new combine may cost $75,000. With the custom charge at $13 per acre, this equates to 5,700 acres to cover the price of the combine.

On a bushel basis, the 1927 machine requires 3,000 bushels of wheat to pay for itself. In 1986, 20,000 bushels of wheat was required.

For further information on this custom survey contact Garth Nickorick at farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0 or phone 556-4247.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

December 15, 1986
For immediate release

November temperatures just below normal

Although the average temperatures in November were 2 to 3° Celsius below normal, the early snow across Alberta should have helped reduce any winter damage to crops, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Peter Dzikowski, agriculture weather resource specialist, with the conservation and development branch in Edmonton, says however, the cold snap would have meant higher heating costs for most farm families.

"November started off cool, then it turned cold for about two weeks, providing an early taste of winter," he says in his weather summary for the month. "Minimum temperatures in Alberta dropped to about -35°C in the northwest, between -25° and -30°C in central regions, and around -25°C in southern areas.

"The protective blanket of snow covering overwintering crops minimized the risk of cold injury."

Temperatures bounced back at the end of the month to above normal levels, providing relief after the cold snap. Average monthly temperatures varied from -17.3°C at High Level, 5.9°C below normal, to -2.9°C at Lethbridge, 2.1°C below normal.

"Most parts of Alberta had monthly average temperatures about 2 to 3°C below normal," he says. "This means space heating requirements were 10 to 15 per cent greater."

Precipitation amounts ranged from 59 mm at Edson (that is 59 cm of snow), about three times their long-term average for November, to 11.9 mm at Red Deer, 20 per cent below their long term average. There was no consistent precipitation pattern, but most locations reported between 20 and 30 mm total precipitation.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

December 15, 1986
For immediate release

Trucking companies respond to survey

More than 100 Alberta trucking companies have responded to an Alberta Agriculture survey on how much they charge to move grain.

The results of the grain hauling rates survey have just been released by Garth Nickorick of the farm business management branch in Olds.

The survey of 102 trucking firms was made from September to November. Truck capacity was in the 20 to 35 tonne capacity.

Rates for distances less than 10 miles ranged from $3.65 to $5.25 per tonne or 10 to 12 cents per bushel. Hauls 10 to 50 miles ranged most commonly from $5 to $8 per tonne or 14 to 22 cents per bushel.

Distance from 50 to 100 miles most commonly ranged from $7 to $9 per tonne or 19 to 25 cents per bushel.

For distance greater than 100 miles, $10 to $17 per tonne or 27 to 45 cents per bushel was the most common rate.

All prices quoted here are for wheat and the appropriate conversion for other crops should be made.

For more information on this survey and other grain harvesting surveys, contact Garth Nickorick, farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

December 15, 1986
For immediate release

North/south reference misleading

It's a big country north and south of Edmonton and those general terms can prove frustrating for people especially if a money issue is involved.

References about guidelines applying to farmers living one direction or the other from the provincial capital can be misleading, says an economist with Alberta Agriculture in Olds.

"It can be an easy way to refer to things in everyday conversation," says Craig Edwards with the farm business management branch, "but when you're talking about boundaries where federal tax policies apply, more detail is needed."

Edwards says, in a recent release on the federal investment tax credit being phased out, more explanation was needed on where the different levels of taxation apply.

The investment tax credit was created several years ago to help stimulate spending by providing farmers with a tax break. However that incentive is being phased out by the federal government over the next two years. The rate of tax credit varied depending on where a farmer lived.

"In the earlier release the investment tax credit rate of 10 per cent and 7 per cent were explained as being for an area north of Edmonton for 10 per cent in 1986 and an area south of Edmonton for 7 per cent in 1986," says Edwards. "This generalization is inadequate.

"The bottom line is that farmers thinking about putting up a building or purchasing new machinery should realize that this tax credit is being phased out. But they should also know where the boundaries are and exactly what level of tax applies to their operation, before they start making any plans."

(Cont'd)

North/south reference misleading (cont'd)

To explain the details, Edwards referred directly to Information Circular #78-4R3, available from Revenue Canada.

The full explanation is that Census Division 15, Peace River (excluding urban area of Grande Prairie) is the 10 per cent area and all other areas are 7 per cent for 1986.

"The 10 per cent area is further described as that portion of the province lying north of a line commencing at the point of intersection of the British Columbia border along the southern boundary of Improvement District 16 to the western boundary of Improvement District 15; then along the southern and eastern boundaries of Improvement District 15 to its point of intersection with Improvement District 17 and Municipal District 92; then east along the northern boundary of Municipal District 92 to its point of intersection with counties 7 and 12; then south along the western boundaries of the Gold Fish Lake Indian Reserve, county 19 and the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve; then east along the southern boundaries of the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve, county 19 and the most southern boundary of Improvement District 18 to the Saskatchewan border."

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

December 15, 1986
For immediate release

1987 farm calendars available from DA offices

A compact farm office organizer, which serves as a place to keep track of everything from financial records to market prices, is now available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

The Save-All Management Planning Calendar, a "pouch calendar" that has proven popular with many farm families for the past six years is now available, without charge, at all DA offices.

"We find that people use it for a wide range of purposes," says Maggie Lamb, office manager with the department's farm business management branch in Olds.

"Along with using it to look up the month and day, results from a recent survey show the calendar is used as a temporary file for bills and receipts; for recording livestock breeding dates; for market prices; for recording appointments and upcoming events; for seeding and harvesting dates; for noting weather conditions and even birthdays."

Each month, the practical and durable calendar shows a list of dates and events to remember, displays the current month with room for notations on each date, notes days elasped and number of days in the current year and provides a message from a calendar sponsor.

"Farm families and district extension staff praise this type of calendar," says Lamb. "People have said the date reminders are useful, they've appreciated the product and service information from the sponsors and they like the size and strength of the pouch.

Although produced by Alberta Agriculture, the cost of publishing the calendar is funded by several sponsors. Lamb says the department appreciates the co-operation and support provided by the agencies and companies in producing this edition.

(Cont'd)

1987 farm calendar available from DA offices (cont'd)

Sponsors providing funds again this year include Acklands, Cyanamid Canada Inc., Alberta Treasury Branches and Alberta Agriculture's home economics branch.

New sponsors this year include, CN Rail, Cominco Ltd., Drummond Brewing Co. Ltd., Hoechst Canada Inc., Kubota Tractor Canada Ltd., Olds College and Alberta Agriculture conservation and development branch.

Limited quantities of the calendars are available to Alberta farm families on a first come, first served basis from Alberta Agriculture district offices. For more information on the calendar contact Maggie Lamb in Olds at 556-4238.

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Contact: Maggie Lamb
556-4238

AGRI-NEWS

JAN - 6 1987

AL.1.691

Best Wishes for Christmas
and the New Year
from the staff of
Alberta Agriculture's
Information Services Division

December 22, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Trade agreement should be good for agriculture........................1

Don't blame the weatherman it's those darn sunspots..................4

Farmers should plan for retirement...................................6

Don't ignore horses in winter..8

Grain drying rates vary...11

Alberta 4-H'ers sweep national show.................................12

Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

December 22, 1986
For immediate release

Trade agreement should be good for agriculture

Although the "free-trade" title itself may be a misnomer, the results of the ongoing trade talks between Canada and the United States should have a positive long term affect on agriculture in Alberta, says a provincial expert.

The comprehensive trade agreement being discussed probably won't please every segment of the industry says Dr. Joe Rosario, director of trade policy for Alberta Agriculture, but generally it will go a long way in putting Canadian and Alberta agriculture producers in a more competitive position with the rest of the world.

"We hear so much about 'free trade' and that is really misleading," said Rosario, in a recent interview. "Everything is so preliminary now I don't know how anyone can say things will be free. What we should see is a comprehensive trade agreement which lays out a system for trading between the two countries...an agreement which gets away from the penalties and tarriffs and protectionism measures which now affect many Canadian goods when they go across the border."

He says the final agreement with the United States will be important but Alberta producers must remember that the U.S. is only one of Canada's trading partners.

"I don't want to belittle what the agreement will mean, but none the less, it is really only the tip of the iceberg. About 75 per cent of our agricultural trade will still be with other countries," says Rosario.

The policy advisor says while the U.S. agreement is important to the two countries involved, the greater impact may be what it means to Canada in relation to the international trade pact known as GATT.

"A comprehensive trade agreement with the United States in some ways is only a stepping stone in increasing Canadian agriculture's competitive position with the rest of the world."

(Cont'd)

GATT which stands for General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade is an international agreement created in 1947. Over the years it has grown to include 88 countries and has been very successful in helping to reduce or eliminate trade barriers between its members. It has become a charter governing almost all world trade except for that of the Communist countries.

Its basic principles call for its members, on a basis of "reciprocity and mutual advantage" to negotiate a "substantial reduction in customs tarrifs and other impediments to trade, and the elimination of discriminatory practices in international trade".

With a comprehensive U.S. trade agreement under its belt Canada would be in a better position when arriving with its products at the international marketplace.

"For the Alberta farmer I don't think they should expect things to happen overnight as far as the Canada/U.S. trade agreement is concerned," says Rosario. "Probably early in 1987 the talks will get down to the nitty gritty issues of what will be included in the trade agreement. And according to the timetable established there should be some form of an agreement reached by 1988."

But even at that, Rosario said it will still just be a framework which sets things in motion. The actual details of how specific commodities will be sold across the border will still have to worked out.

"The most important point of this agreement is that it will create a mechanism to allow us (Canada and U.S.) to settle our trade disputes," he said. "It should avoid or eliminate the need for terms such as countervail, safeguard measures, dumping and unfair trade practices."

He says the agreement will resolve the push and shove issues over whether a Canadian or American product is being unfairly subsidized by the government, forcing one side to impose measures against the other.

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Contact: Dr. Joe Rosario
427-2637

December 22, 1986
For immediate release

Don't blame the weatherman, it's those darn sunspots

The amount of nuts a squirrel stores for the winter, might be as good a forecasting tool as any, as experts agree there is really no scientific formula to predict the weather.

It may be sea-surface temperature, the sunspot cycle or the continental snow cover, that have impacts on the weather patterns. No one is really sure.

But all experts agree that droughts, along with other climatic calamities, do happen and their economic impact can be severe.

Speaking at the recent Western Provincial Conference, Dr. Timothy Ball, associate professor of geography at the University of Winnipeg, says there is a direct link between sunspot cycles and drought sequences on the prairies. He says the exact physical link is not yet understood.

But by researching history, reading reports from early explorers and trappers, and observation of tree rings, Ball says the frequency of severe drought is evident over recorded time.

Referring to a recommendation by explorer John Palliser in 1857 who said the southern prairies (Palliser's Triangle) wasn't fit for people and agriculture, Ball says this comment wasn't entirely wrong.

"We should not forget that although Palliser's triangle has been generally improperly defined, debated and for many discredited, there are still many thousands of acres that never should have been broken to grain farming," says Ball. "Each time there is a drought we are reminded of this fact and yet the more we move away from the extreme period of the 1930s the more we forget the lessons learned so hard by so many.

"The results (of drought) can be devastating and have been more severe in past centuries and we ignore the pattern and the implications to our peril, especially when we have some of the technology and skills necessary to anticipate and alleviate the problems."

(Cont'd)

Meanwhile two U.S. experts believe it is the sea surface temperature in the North Pacific that offers the greatest potential for seasonal forecasting.

Arthur Douglas from Creighton University in Omaha Nebraska and Phillip Englehart from the Midwest Research Institute in Kansas City Missouri say there is a link between sea temperature and the weather although more study is needed.

Dr. Ball and other experts point out that the impact of drought and the degree of hardship created by the lack of moisture depends largely on timing.

Dr. Barry Grace, an agrometeorologist with Agriculture Canada research station in Lethbridge, says crop failures can occur in one year and not another even though both years have the same precipitation.

If moisture comes at critical times for crop development then the impact of a relatively dry year is lessened.

Dr. Grace compared recent drought conditions and The Dirty Thirties.

"Whenever dry spells or droughts occur there are references and comparisions to the drought conditions and dust storms of the 1930s," he says. "However, it is difficult to compare the conditions of the 1930s and droughts of 1984 and 1985. The major problems during The Thirties were caused by poor soil management, improper tillage practices, major infestations of grasshoppers and other insects and a poor economy."

"With modern cultural practices, strip farming and minimum tillage, wind erosion is less of a problem. Pest management programs today include extensive monitoring and control procedures. Government programs and crop insurance have alleviated some of the worst of the economic problems that producers faced during The Thirties."

(Cont'd)

Comparing precipitation conditions, Dr. Grace said in Lethbridge the driest year during the 1930s was the 1930-31 crop year with 287 mm of precipitation recorded.

"The total for 1983-84 (in Lethbridge) was only 213 mm. The 2 mm of precipitation recorded in Lethbridge during June 1985 was less than in any June period during The Thirties," says Grace.

He says even if modern practices could have been applied in the 1930s there still would have been poor yields and crop failures.

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Contact: David Neilson
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December 22, 1986
For immediate release

Farmers should plan for retirement

Just because you're a farmer doesn't mean you shouldn't think about retirement like nearly everyone else in the world.

Retirement planning should be as much a part of the farm business as any other decision made by the farm couple, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

"A lot of times I guess people don't want to think about it, or don't want to think about getting old," says Jean Wilson, a family resource management specialist with the department in Edmonton.

"Maybe they feel as long as their health is good they will stay farming. Maybe they feel they can't afford it. Regardless of the reason it is important to plan for retirement and make some decisions that not only benefit the farmer, but his family as well," she says.

Dealing with the retirement issue, as part of overall farm estate planning, should help to resolve three main questions about retirement. It should let the farmer and his wife decide where they will live after retirement. They will know where the money is coming from to support them during retirement years and it will help them decide what to do with the farm once they do retire.

Wilson says by planning ahead, retirement can be something that is looked forward to, rather than being something a farmer is forced to accept.

The specialist says it is important for the farm couple to make some decisions about retirement as early as they can in their farming careers and then set a course toward those goals.

As the years pass the couple can review and update the plans and make changes as the situation dictates.

"It is important to set aside a retirement savings fund of some kind," says Wilson. "Many people say they can't afford it, but in most cases they can't afford not to.

(Cont'd)

Wilson says when people think about where they will live they should be realistic. Do they really want to move to a warm climate, a thousand miles away, leaving behind family and friends and everything that has been familiar to them for 30 or 40 years?

"There's nothing wrong with this plan if that is what a person wants, but often they will do something along those lines and then realize four months down the road it isn't what they want," she says.

Another point is to plan activities for leisure time. The farm couple should develop hobbies or other projects they can pursue once they retire from farm work.

A major concern is often the disposal of the farm.

"If there are children interested in farming, the farm couple should decide when they want to phase out of the operation, or when they will turn the whole farm over to a son or a daughter. If possible, they should pick a date, which not only sets a goal for the farm couple but also lets the son or daughter know the timetable."

The specialist says decisions need to be made on how the farm will be turned over to a son or daughter, what type of business arrangement is needed and also how they will deal with those children who are not interested in farming.

"These are just some of the aspects of retirement planning that need to be dealt with," says Wilson. "It is important for the farm couple to discuss the subject and really be in control of their own future."

The retirement issue is just one of the topics covered in the recently produced Alberta Agriculture home study course, Farm Estate Planning, A Family Affair.

For more information on retirement planning, contact Jean Wilson at 427-2412. For a copy of the course contact Home Study, Extension Services Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Jean Wilson
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December 15, 1986
For immediate release

Don't ignore horses in winter

Just because horses naturally prepare themselves for most winter conditions, that doesn't mean they don't need proper care in the cold, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

"The horse has the ability to acclimatize to a wide variety of weather condtions," says Bob Coleman, a horse specialist with the department in Edmonton. "But it still has some basic needs such as food and shelter which must be supplied by the horse owner."

Beginning in early September, shorter days and cooler daytime temperatures, start the process of acclimatization or natural winterizing of the animal for the cold weather ahead.

The major change horse owners see in their animals is in the hair coat. This thicker hair coat is the horse's first line of defence against the cold. The hair not only gets thicker, but also tends to stand up, adding to its insulating qualities.

"The horse also has changes in its basic metabolism which becomes more efficient in drawing energy from body fat stores," says Coleman. "When the temperature drops to -40°C, the acclimatized horse can rapidly supply the necessary energy to meet this new increased requirement from body fat stores rather than depend on extra feed intake only."

Once acclimatized, the horse has some basic needs, such as food and shelter, which must be supplied by the owner.

"Shelter is required primarily for protection from wind and snow," says Coleman. "High winds increase the heat loss from the horse and reduce the insulating properties of the horse's winter hair coat. When the hair coat gets wet, the insulating properties are reduced, increasing heat loss from the horse. The basic shelter can be as simple as a good stand of trees that the horse can get into, or a three-sided pole shed.

(Cont'd)

The relative body condition of the horse at the onset of winter will also affect how well it can cope with the cold. Horses should enter winter in good body condition, with a fat cover over the ribs, says the specialist.

"Horses that are in a thin condition do not have the benefit of that insulating layer of fat and are more easily chilled. It is very difficult to put weight on a horse during winter, as much of the feed taken in each day is used to keep warm.

Coleman says a good feeding program is a must during winter. An increase in energy is required due to the decreased temperatures (increase energy intake by 20 per cent for every drop of 10°C below -10°C).

Much of this energy can be supplied by feeding good quality hay. During winter the energy from hay is more benefical than the energy from grain. The digestion of hay causes more heat to be produced and this heat can be used to maintain body temperature.

A daily diet of 18 to 20 pounds of good quality legume grass hay will meet a mature horse's requirements for energy and protein. Providing a supplement of 1:1 livestock mineral, salt and vitamin A should round out the horse's diet.

"Young horses have a higher nutrient demand than their mature friends, as they are still growing," says Coleman. "It is recommended that horses, less than one year old, be fed separately from other horses, as they do not compete well for feed and their ration requirements are different."

While mature, idle horses may survive during winter by eating snow instead of drinking water, providing free choice warmed water is recommended. The incidence of impaction colic is higher in horses forced to eat snow than those supplied with water in winter.

Free choice water is esstential for growing horses and pregnant mares.

(Cont'd)

"Horses must rely on owners to help them through the winter," says Coleman. "It is important to keep track of body condition. This is not done over the fence, but by getting your hands on them. A dense winter coat can easily hide a thin horse.

"If your horse has good health, good body condition, shelter from the elements and good feed and water, coping with those cold winter conditions will be no problem."

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Contact: Bob Coleman
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December 22, 1986
For immediate release

Grain drying rates vary

There are no simple averages to be drawn for the cost of drying grain in the province, according to a recent survey.

Rates for hiring this service vary according to fuel costs, type and efficiency of dryer, moisture content of the grain, climate and type of crop.

The custom grain drying survey was conducted from September to November by Maureen Whitlock of the statistics branch of Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton. The figures were recently released by Garth Nickorick with the farm business management branch in Olds.

To provide some indication of costs, Whitlock compiled the following numbers for wheat under fall conditions.

Rates were quoted per hour and per bushel. These have been transformed into an average charge per percentage of moisture decline. For example, 25 cents per bushel was charged to dry wheat from 18 per cent to 14.5 per cent moisture or 7.2 cents per percentage moisture drop.

Under this format custom charges ranged from 3.5 cents per point to 8.3 cents per point. The most common rate was 4 to 6 cents per point with the average being 5.2 cents per point. On a per hour basis with full service, the rates were $37 to $65 per hour with the most common range being $45 to $60 per hour. On a per bushel basis, the rates were 20 to 30 cents a bushel.

"There are several operators who charge a flat fee for use of the machine plus the value of fuel used," says Nickorick. "This is a good method if fuel use can be adequately measured. This range is most common at $30 per hour.

"Rates vary depending on the time of year. The warming of the grain on cold winter days is a major factor as is the humidity."

For a copy of the survey please contact Garth Nickorick, farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
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December 22, 1986
For immediate release

Alberta 4-H'ers sweep national show

Four Alberta 4-H members recently took top honors at the Canadian Western Agribition in Regina.

They were members of the 1986 Alberta Livestock Judging Team at the 10th annual International 4-H Judging Seminar.

Forty-four 4-H delegates from across Canada and the United States demonstrated their knowledge of livestock, judging individual classes of beef and dairy cattle, light horses, sheep and swine. Competitors were marked on their class placings, as well as oral and written reasons used to support their placement decisions.

Alberta 4-H'ers captured four placings in the top seven grand aggregate standings. Steven Maki, 19, from Eckville, stood fourth overall in the judging competition. He was followed by Joanne Koot, 16, from the Coaldale Swine Club, and Pat McAllistar, 19 from Olds, in fifth and sixth place respectively. Byron Wilkie, 17, from Endiang came seventh.

Koot placed first in the sheep judging competition and was followed in third place by Paul Kotowich, 21, of the St. Paul Multi Club. Lexi Wright, 16, from Didsbury placed second overall in the dairy judging competition. McAllistar and Wilkie ranked second and third in horse judging.

Other members of the Alberta team were Shelley Meakin, 16, of Morinville and Michael Barrett, 16, from Okotoks. The team was coached and chaperoned by Brian Maitland, regional 4-H specialist from Airdrie and Dale Smith, leader of Valleyview's Wild Rose 4-H Beef Club. They accompanied the Alberta team members during the four-day event.

The International 4-H Judging Seminar was sponsored by Canadian Western Agribition, John Deere Ltd. and the Canadian Charolais Association. The Alberta team's travel was sponsored by Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch.

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AGRI-NEWS

December 29, 1986

For immediate release

This Week

Agriculture industry changing..........1

Farm operation must be able to change..........3

To remodel or not to remodel - that is the dilemma..........5

New variety of triticale available in 1988..........8

Herbicide costs are hard for farmers to justify..........10

Conference helps horse breeders keep pace..........12

Oklahoma expert featured at breeders' conference..........14

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

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December 29, 1986
For immediate release

Agriculture industry changing

Over the long haul the agricultural industry around the world is being allowed to find its legs again after a period of expensive government intervention which in some ways caused more problems than it solved.

The face of agriculture is changing says an expert with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton. It has already happened in some countries and the writing is on the wall in North America.

Rather than be influenced by multi-billion dollar subsidy and support programs, agriculture is getting back to being competitive through producer efficiency, says Dr. Joe Rosario, trade policy director for the department.

"It is a global phenomenon that government support of agriculture is being withdrawn," he said in a recent interview. "The change is happening because governments realize that the amount of intervention shown in agriculture has not solved the problems. Governments realize there is a limit to what they can do.

"If our agriculture is to survive it will survive on the basis of its performance in export markets and its ability to survive in a very competitive situation."

Rosario says the ongoing Canada/U.S. trade negotiations are an indication of those changes that are taking place.

Governments throughout the world have made tremendous financial commitments to agriculture which cannot be sustained.

"Looking at the U.S. Farm Bill, nearly every congressman and every senator realizes it is not possible to sustain these expenditures indefinitely," he says. "As temporary measures some of them work, but in the long run U.S. agriculture will be involved in a more competitive environment. The farmers that survive will be those who are efficient."

The Canadian agriculture industry is in a similar situation.

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"When you look at the problems caused by world surpluses of commodities, such as wheat, to a large extent the problem is a result of government intervention," he says. "Governments have provided a level of support to maintain production that the market cannot sustain. We are producing more than we need."

Rosario says Australia and New Zealand have already taken steps to let their agriculture industries stand alone.

"I don't think any farmer is going to wake up one morning and find the government has said 'go fend for yourself'," says the trade specialist. "It will be a gradual, evolving concept that comes about slowly. It will be some kind of compromise between self-help and outside help. There is no easy formula."

In Canada, the changes will also involve greater co-operation between provinces.

"It will be to our advantage in Western Canada to get our house in order too," he says. "It will be important to resolve any regional differences and inter-provincial barriers so that we are operating at maximum efficiency."

He says the changes are not only for the sake of efficiency, but for social good as well.

The changes will be important to such things as the survival of the family farm. Rosario says the family farm concept will also go through changes. It will have to keep pace to perform efficiently in the global market.

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Contact: Dr. Joe Rosario
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December 29, 1986
For immediate release

Farm operation must be able to change

Confidence and flexibility are two of the key characteristics Alberta farmers must demonstrate to survive the weather and economy, says a producer from the Hanna area.

Norman Storch says the combination doesn't guarantee any operation will be on easy street, but its important not to give up hope or to put all your wheat in one bin.

He says farmers must develop their operations so that if it is a bad year on one side of the business, perhaps another side will do better.

"I am a firm believer in diversification," he says. "Typically, diversification on a grain farm has meant cattle and that's fine. Cows can harvest short crops much more efficiently than a combine.

"But maybe there are other options for diversification including an off-farm job, or raising red wriggler worms, or maybe mushrooms, or maybe even buying into a chicken farm. When it doesn't rain on the wheat that second source of income looks pretty good."

Storch operates a broiler hatching egg operation along with a 1,600 acre grain and cattle farm about 25 miles north of Hanna. He started out in the poultry business in 1973 and expanded his operation in 1976. He keeps about 65 cows. Storch made his comments at the recent Western Provincial Conference.

Farming in a dry country like that around Hanna, Storch has adapted his practices to maximize water and soil conservation.

"Even on good years our crops and livestock are inevitably stressed at some point in the year by lack of moisture," he says. His area receives about 15 inches of precipitation a year, including 6 to 9 inches of rain in the growing season.

By applying conservation techniques Storch says his crops are able to make the best use of moisture.

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"When it does rain your land and crop have to be able to take maximum advantage of that moisture," he says. "A properly fertilized crop, with little weed competition, on land with good moisture holding ability will utilize as much of the limited moisture as possible.

"I have often argued that lack of moisture was the limiting factor to crop production in our area. Perhaps that should really be proper moisture utilization is the limiting factor."

Storch says variable weather is only one of the challenges testing producer survival.

"Drought is just another one of the many problems facing us today. It is really no different than rising costs, falling prices, insects or any of the other negative situations a farmer finds himself in."

"The financial position of the farm must be such that periodic downturns can be handled. I don't think this necessarily means a lot of cash in the bank but it does require the sensible use of credit."

He says if a farmer is confident in his financial position he is better equipped to deal with problems such as drought. Storch says a program offered by Alberta Agriculture called Gear-Up Financially, which helps develops an individual financial management program, is a good investment in time.

"To survive a problem like drought a farmer must have confidence in his ability to do everything - every little thing - to grow that bumper crop. His operation must also remain flexible enough to absorb the shock of a crop failure and carry on another year," he says.

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December 29, 1986
For immediate release

To remodel or not to remodel - that is the dilemma

Unless a person has all kinds of money, probably the first thing to think about before remodeling a farm home is whether it is worth the effort.

Remodelling can be expensive and before a person pumps big dollars into the old farm house they should assess the structural soundness of the home, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

There is no point in putting good money into a major upgrading project which still leaves the owner with an old house that is uncomfortable or doesn't meet their needs, says Donna Bagdan, provincial housing specialist with the department in Edmonton.

Depending on the objectives, the homeowner has three options to weigh when considering improvements: they can renovate; build an addition or build a new home, says Bagdan.

"How well the house was built originally and how well it has been kept up is important," she says. "The physical aspects of changing a house are rarely a problem, although the economics must be questioned."

Bagdan says some people opt for renovations for the wrong reasons. She says there is nothing wrong with remodelling a home, as long as the homeowner makes sure it makes sense.

She says some of the reasons used to justify remodelling a house include: the structure has sentimental value; the existing home site is fully developed and there is no room for a new house; the family can live in it while the work is being done; and because it is a smaller project the family feels it can do most of the work themselves, saving on labor costs.

"But, rarely should these be the most important points to consider," she says. "The structural soundness of the existing home should be the first concern."

In remodelling an existing structure there can be plenty of surprises, and none can be more devastating than the final bill, she says.

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It costs about $50 a square foot to build a new farm home at today's prices, says the housing specialist.

"The cost of converting existing space can be done for between 33 and 66 per cent less than the cost of new space, while the cost of an addition can range from 10 to 25 per cent more than the cost per square foot of the same space in a new home.

"If a person was thinking about building an addition, it may be more practical to fully develop an attic, basement, porch, garage or carport, or convert space from a seldom used area such as bedroom, vacated by a colleg student, into needed space such as a farm business office."

Updating space by reorganizing, modernizing kitchens, bathrooms and entries may make better use of the space available.

As far as saving money by doing some of the work yourself, it is important to consider that in new home construction material represents about 70 to 75 per cent of the cost, while labor represents only 25 to 30 per cent of the cost.

"A farmer has to consider it might be more cost efficient to spend his efforts doing something else around the farm than working on the house," says Bagdan.

When planning a remodelling project, the housing specialist has a few pointers:

- assess the structural soundness of the house first.
- come up with a plan, but allow plenty of time (even several months) to mull it over and mentally visualize how the plan will work with the rest of the house.
- get written estimates and signed contracts with the contractors setting out the terms of the work to be done.
- on most projects, the farmer and his family can act as the general contractor and hire the sub-trades as needed.
- any renovations or additions should be done so they blend in with the existing house. Materials and design should match, so it isn't obvious where the addition was made.

(Cont'd)

To remodel or not to remodel - that is the dilemma (cont'd)

"If work is being done to upgrade or add on to an older home it should blend throughout," says the housing specialist. "And today with the type of building materials available that isn't unrealistic. It may take a bit of searching but for probably the same money people should be able to find trims, doors, windows and even exterior siding materials that are the same or will blend well with the existing house.

"Any of the work being done should be considered a long term investment. It is going to be work that should meet your needs and be comfortable for you and your family for years to come."

Farm families considering renovations or building a new home can contact their nearest Alberta Agriculture district home economist or regional engineer for a checklist that is useful in determining the structural soundness of a home.

There are also several publications available from the department which provide good advice and there is a comprehensive home study course on Farm Home Planning which, in step-by-step fashion, goes through all the things people need to do when building or remodelling.

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Contact: Donna Bagdan
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December 29, 1986
For immediate release

New variety of triticale available in 1988

The latest variety of triticale, a man-made grain that is a cross between wheat and rye, should be available to Western Canadian farmers in 1988.

The new spring variety, developed at the Alberta Agriculture field crops branch at Lacombe, has been sent for registration. Once that is received it is expected there will be adequate seed supply available to farmers for the 1988 season.

The new variety, which is as yet unnamed, has proven to out perform other existing triticale varieties, says Dr. Don Salmon, the plant breeder at Lacombe who developed the new line.

Tests under dryland conditions have identified as much as 30 per cent yield improvement over wheat as well as a 14 per cent yield improvement and a 3.4 per cent improvement in bushel weight compared to another triticale variety called Carman.

The continuing work with triticale doesn't mean it will one day replace other traditional crops, but it will play a role as one more option on which a farmer can draw.

Triticale's name is a combination of the scientific names of wheat (Triticum) and rye (Secale).

"Research was started on triticale because it was felt that the best characteristics of wheat and rye could be combined," says Salmon. "Although these goals have not been met, each new variety released demonstrates major gain in yield and grain quality."

Developed for use in relatively dry growing conditions, it can be milled as a specialty flour, or used as a feed grain for cattle. In higher moisture growing conditions it can be a productive forage crop.

Salmon says there was some evidence in the 1800s that triticale occurred naturally, although there is no real proof. Scientific efforts to develop the cross began in the early 1930s in Europe. Triticale research began in Canada in 1954, at the University of Manitoba.

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Today work continues worldwide to develop strains with improved production for specific growing conditions.

The new variety was developed through six years of plant breeding work in Lacombe. The basic genetic material had earlier undergone about five years of development work in Mexico.

Given test number T44, it will be added to the six triticales already registered for use in Canada. There are four spring and two winter varieties, which are used to varying degrees. In the spring varieties there is Rosner, which was the first and is seldom used now, followed by Welsh, Carman, and Triwell. On the winter side there is Wintri and Decade.

Although T44 is a tall variety, growing to four feet in height or more, it is "very" lodging resistant. Its production exceeds other triticale varieties and it shows good resistance to common root rot, leaf rust and stem rust, bunt and loose smut.

It's major flaw, as with most triticale varieties is late maturity and susceptability to sprouting.

"In drier areas, where later maturity is not a problem, it can surpass wheat yields by 14 to 30 per cent," says Salmon. "In general triticale seed production is not recommended outside the brown soil zones of the prairies. (In Alberta that is an area roughly east of Stettler and south of Olds, that extends across the prairies to Winnipeg).

"Under irrigation or in the higher rainfall areas, spring triticale is an excellent forage comparable to oats and barley. It can have between 9 and 12 per cent protein which can be equal or higher than barley silage, depending on the season."

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December 29, 1986
For immediate release

Herbicide costs are hard for farmers to justify

Although there is plenty of discussion about how farmers can protect the soil and conserve ground moisture the experts say there is no perfect perscription they can recommend.

While the conventional methods of summerfallow and cultivation are relatively inexpensive methods of weed control, it allows for too much ground moisture loss and creates the potential for soil erosion.

On the other hand, zero and minimum tillage practices can maximize moisture conservation, but can cost a fortune in weed control chemicals.

The specialists, speaking at the recent Western Provincial Conference, say unless the price of herbicides comes down or the price of grain goes way up there is really no obvious economic choice for farmers.

Either they save money now and run the risk of losing moisture and soil or they put out cash for chemicals that may not be recovered through the sale of the crop.

Dr. Wayne Lindwall, with the Agriculture Canada research station in Lethbridge, says because minimum tillage is one of the best methods to protect the soil resource, perhaps the farmer shouldn't have to bear the full cost associated with crop production.

He says the minimum tillage systems have been effective for controlling soil erosion, runoff and water pollution. As well it aids in soil, water and energy conservation.

The head of soil science section says there are a few problems with minimum tillage, mostly relating to management and weed control, but these will be overcome as farmers gain more experience.

"Probably the most critical problem limiting widespread adoption of minimum or zero tillage is the high cost of the most suitable herbicides in relation to the cost of conventional cultivation," says Lindwall. "There is little, if any, short-term economic incentive for producers to adopt the most effective minimum tillage practices.

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Herbicide costs are hard for farmers to justify (cont'd)

"The adoption of the most effective minimum tillage and cropping practices would virtually eliminate our serious soil degradation problems and ensure that soil productivity is maintained for future generations.

"Producers should not be expected to bear all the costs associated with the adoption of recommended management practices when society receives most of the benefits," says Lindwall.

Dr. E.H. Stobbe, professor of plant science at the University of Manitoba, says zero and minimum tillage methods have created a dependance by farmers on herbicides.

"When grain prices are high these costly inputs can be covered based on a consideration of long term benefits of reduced soil erosion," says Stobbe. "On the short term these farmers may, however, experience severe financial hardships."

Stobbe says the chemical companies that produce herbicides set prices according to what the market will bear. Unfortunately some markets have more money than farmers in Western Canada.

"Since the herbicides are sold on a global basis, each product has a diverse market potential," he says. "The herbicide pricing is established for the high value crops or uses. Unfortunately, the crops we grow on the Canadian prairie are low value crops and the price we must pay for the herbicides appears to be excessive."

He says there may be some future relief when patents on the popular herbicides expire, allowing other companies to produce non-brand name or generic herbicides at lower prices.

Another factor affecting price is a greater concern by the federal licencing agency to make sure, that under recommended use, the chemicals being produced do not present a public health or safety hazard. Companies are being asked to pay for this additional testing and the costs are passed on to the consumer, the farmer.

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December 29, 1986
For immediate release

Conference helps horse breeders keep pace

Horse breeders from across Alberta are expected in Red Deer in mid-January to hear advice from the experts on how to breed and market horses.

Nearly two dozen speakers, representing horse breeders, researchers and industry officials will be featured during the two day conference at the Capri Centre, January 17 and 18.

Bob Coleman, a specialist with the Alberta Agriculture horse industry branch in Edmonton, says the conference is geared for all horse breeders regardless of size of operation.

"The size of an operation and the breed of horses being raised isn't a factor, as far as this conference being useful to someone," he says. "It is intended to provide some very practical information for all horse breeders. The conference will deal with the technical aspects of breeding and animal health, along with the business aspects of owning and selling horses."

The program is divided into five sections including Arabian, Quarter Horse, Standardbred and Thoroughbred sessions and a general program on horse breeding.

"Once someone is registered they can attend any session that appeals to them," says Coleman. "For instance you don't have to be an Arabian horse breeder to attend one of the Arabian sessions."

Topics to be covered during the two days range from talks on conception and early pregnancy loss in broodmares, to techniques of blood typing, equine research and principles of marketing applied to the horse industry.

Speakers will include Alberta breeders and trainers such as Sheldon Soderberg from Red Deer, Sandy Hein of Calgary, Bill Speight of Rocky Mountain House and Don Laczo of Winfield. They will be part of a panel discussion.

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Other national and international experts addressing the conference include Dr. Frank Bristol from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon; Jay Stream from California; Dr. G. Woods from Washington State University at Pullman; Dr. D.G. Powell from the University of Kentucky at Lexington and Ron Southern from Spruce Meadows in Calgary.

"There are going to be some very talented people there to share what they have learned about the horse industry with horse breeders from Alberta and other provinces," says Coleman.

The conference is sponsored by the Horse Breeders Conference Committee, which includes representatives from each of the four main horse breeds and the horse industry branch.

Registration is $75 per person or $125 per couple. Anyone who registers before January 16 has an opportunity to win an early-bird prize of a ski-weekend for two at Banff. The Capri Centre is also offering conference room rates.

For futher information on the conference contact Coleman at his Edmonton office, 427-8905 or the horse industry branch office in Calgary at 297-6650.

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Contact: Bob Coleman
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December 29, 1986
For immediate release

Oklahoma expert featured at breeders' conference

An internationally-known expert with a proven ability to breed, train and market horses will be one of the main speakers in Red Deer in January at a conference for horse breeders.

Bob Loomis, from Marietta, Oklahoma, who, along with his wife has built an international reputation on their ability to raise and train reining horses, will be among the speakers at the fourth annual Alberta Horse Breeders Conference, January 16 to 18 at the Capri Centre.

He will address the conference on breeding for today's market.

The Loomises have specialized in raising and training reining horses. These are horses that are taught to perform complicated and high speed manouevres with very subtle directions from the rider.

Loomis is among the top winners at events such as futurities sponsored by the National Reining Horse Association and major quarter horse shows.

The conference, which is open to all horse breeders in Alberta and neighboring provinces, is sponsored by the Horse Breeders Conference Committee, which includes representatives of the four major horse breed associations and Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch.

Bob Coleman, a horse specialist with the department in Edmonton, says Loomis is well known for his ability in selecting bloodlines and his success in training reining horses.

Loomis has a reputation for raising high calibre animals. Along with selecting top stallions, he is noted for his stringent selection of broodmares that are either highly rated themselves or have produced high performance offspring.

"Because of his ability to select the animals and go on to train them to be winners, he is amply qualified to address this conference," says Coleman. "He'll be discussing his philosophy on breeding and selection of breeding stock."

(Cont'd)

Registration for the conference is $75 per person or $125 per couple. Those registered before January 16 will have a chance to win a draw for a ski-weekend for two at Banff.

For further information on the conference contact the horse industry branch office in Edmonton at 427-8905 or in Calgary at 297-6650.

30

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